Empty Museums: Transculturation and the Development of Public Art Museums in Japan

Thesis

UNRESTRICTED

Empty Museums:

Transculturation and the Development of Public Art Museums in Japan

Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in Sociology Discipline, Faculty of Social Sciences,

The Open University

Masaaki Morishita

BA, MA

10 January 2003

Author No: R592912X
Submission date: 9 January 2003
Award date: 9 April 2003

Abstract

This thesis conceptualises the development of public art museums in modern Japan as a process of "transculturation". The introduction of the public art museum – as an institution and concept originated in the modern West – into early-twentieth-century Japan and its subsequent development have been commonly criticised by Japanese museologists in the context of theories of "westernisation". Accordingly the characteristics of the Japanese institutions have often been dismissed as evidence of their incompetence and their failure and to properly realise the Western models. My research, in contrast, examines the processes of transculturation through which the distinctive features of Japanese art museums were *positively* developed in relation to the localised conditions specific to the "art fields" of Tokyo and other provincial cities. The Western institution and concept of the public art museum were actively and strategically translated into distinctive Japanese forms in the course of their adaptation to the specific socio-cultural environment of Japan. In my analysis, I focus on one particular characteristic of the Japanese institutions – their "emptiness" as defined by their lack of collections, permanent displays, and initially curators. Two particular agents in the Japanese art field are highlighted in the development of these "empty museums"; one is the "art group" associated with the *iemoto* system which had long structured a wide range of traditional cultural practices in Japan and the other is the "curator" whose specialist concerns were related to the Western curatorial practices based on art history. The practices of both agents were formed through the interactions between Western, Japanese, and more regionally/periodically-specific cultural elements. Moreover, these agents

themselves incessantly conflicted and negotiated with each other and the localised contingencies. It was these interactive relations that helped to shape the configurations of the regional art fields and the curatorial practices of the public art museums in those regions. [295 words]

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations

Figures

Tables

Acknowledgements

There are a number of people and institutions whose support was essential to the completion of this thesis and to whom I owe enormous gratitude.

My thanks go first of all to my supervisors – Tony Bennett, Jessica Evans, and Shunya Yoshimi – for their continuous encouragement, advice, inspiration, and wisdom throughout the four years of my PhD study.

I am also grateful to the helpful staff of the Open University – especially the Sociology Discipline, the Faculty of Social Sciences, the Research School, and the Walton Hall Library – who gave me administrative, practical, financial, and academic support.

My research trip to Japan in 2001 was funded by the Japan Foundation Endowment Committee. I would like to express my gratitude for the generous amount of their grant which made this five-week visit possible and successful.

My thanks also go to other institutions and their helpful staff. These institutions include the SOAS Library, the University of Nottingham Library, the Bodleian Japanese Library, the Sophia University Main Library, the Tokyo Metropolitan Library, the Art Library of the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Contemporary Art, the Tokyo Metropolitan Archives, the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly Library, the Aichi Prefectural Library, the Aichi Prefectural Assembly Library, the Aichi Art Library, the Kanagawa Prefectural Library, the Kanagawa Prefectural Assembly

Library, the Tochigi Prefectural Library, the Tochigi Prefectural Assembly Library, and the Tochigi Prefectural Archives.

My success in this research project also owes much to the fantastic interviewees listed in the Appendix. Their knowledge, generosity, enthusiasm, and patience facilitated the research process tremendously.

Personal, motivational, emotional, and practical support was provided by my fellow research students at the Open University, many of whom have already been awarded doctorates. They include Sarah, Liz, Dave, Rick, Jayne, Mary, Lee, Carina, Jane, Rebecca, Mike, Kerry, Rachel, Liz, Oya, Birgit, Gayathri, and Dan. I would also like to thank the precious friends whom I met in my years at the University of Nottingham, including Andrew, Setsu, Miho, Dot, and, especially, Stephen who kindly committed himself to a demanding task of proof reading.

Furthermore, enormous thanks to Miyuki and Anthony for their love and friendship which helped me survive the vicissitudes of a PhD life.

Finally, my special thanks go to my parents for their generous and continuous understanding of their son's selfish venture. I dedicate this work to them.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. The Research Problem

"Empty museums" is a term used to refer to museums of a particular style that developed in twentieth-century Japan. The most typical models of the empty museums are prefectural art museums. The prefecture [1] is the largest administrative division of local authorities in Japan, an equivalent to a British county or American state. There are now 47 prefectures in Japan, including three metropolitan areas (Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka), and 41 prefectural museums specialising in "art" were established by the mid-1990s. Many of these institutions were characterised by their "emptiness". They were regarded as "empty" because of their characteristic lack of four elements when compared to their Western counterparts. These are (1) clear policies for collection, curatorial practices, and educational activities, (2) substantial original collections, (3) curatorial staff, and (4) financial support from public authorities. As a consequence, these institutions were not equipped with "permanent" exhibitions that would require collections, curators, and money. Instead they usually filled their empty galleries with various "temporary" (and often "touring") exhibitions sponsored and curated by other organisations including those of the mass media, private exhibition companies, and most importantly "art groups" ("*bijutsu dantai*" 「美術団体」). The art group is a particular form of organisation developed by Japanese artists after the Meiji period

---

[1] In this thesis, I use the term, "prefecture", to indicate all four terms for the largest administrative divisions of Japanese local government – i.e. *to* (都), *do* (道), *fu* (府), *ken* (県). To be precise, the forty-seven prefectures now consist of one "*to*" (Tokyo), one "*do*" (Hokkaido), two "*fu*" (Osaka and Kyoto), and forty-three "*ken*".

(1868–1912). It is typically formed by a wide range of artists – from Western-style painters to calligraphers – consisting of both professionals and amateurs with skills of diverse levels. These artists are related to one another in the master-disciple hierarchies which are based on the patriarchal system characteristically developed in various fields of traditional Japanese cultural practices – the *iemoto* system (*iemoto-sei* [家元制]). The most important activity of an art group is its regular group exhibition and competition inviting public participation, where the latest works of both masters and disciples are displayed in the museum galleries. Today there are hundreds of major and minor art groups all over the country. Some may have disappeared after a few exhibitions, but it is not unusual that these groups survive for decades. The longest established group is more than a hundred years old.

In this thesis, I treat the "emptiness" of Japanese museums as a "discourse" that belongs to Japanese museologists rather than a statement of fact about a museum type in modern Japan. As I discuss in Chapter 2, the fact is that these museums are by no means "empty"; their galleries are actually filled with various temporary exhibitions sponsored by art groups and other external organisations. The emptiness of the museums is characteristically associated with the absence of the four elements identified earlier whose presence is commonly accepted as a "norm" in the Western institutions. Thus the critics can construct the discourse of emptiness only on the basis that these elements are judged essential for a museum. If museum collections were regarded as trivial, their absence would remain unnoticed. If art group exhibitions were considered an important part of museum practices, their presence would be recognised and appreciated. The attribution of emptiness to the museums is thus dependent on the value judgement of the

museologists.

The critical discourse of empty museums – and this remains one of the most prevalent criticisms of Japanese museums among Japanese museologists – identifies the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (Tokyo-to Bijutsukan [東京都美術館]) as their "origin" in evolutionary accounts of the history of Japanese museums. The Museum was founded in 1926, and it was also the first "prefectural" museum and the first "art" museum in Japanese history. Before then, several "museums" had already been established; but they were either national or private institutions including the Imperial Museums (Teikoku [or Teishitsu] Hakubutsukan [帝国(帝室)博物館]) in Tokyo (1886), Kyoto (1897), and Nara (1895)[2] and the first private museum in Japan, the Okura Museum of Antiquities (Okura Shukokan [大倉集古館], 1917). There had also been several buildings called "art museums" (*bijutsukan* [美術館]); but they were intended only for temporary events – i.e. "expositions" (*hakurankai* [博覧会]) – and were not meant to be permanent institutions.[3] The Metropolitan Museum was the first institution embodying the characteristics that would come to be described as emptiness in many subsequent institutions. It had no collection, no permanent gallery, no curator, and no fund to resource its own exhibition; it devoted its galleries to the temporary exhibitions organised and sponsored by "art groups" and other outside bodies such as local authorities and newspaper publishing companies. The "emptiness" of this museum was discontinued by the introduction of curatorial staff, collection making, and permanent galleries in 1975. Nonetheless, renting its galleries to exhibition

---

[2] For a good account of the complex genealogy of various public museums in the Meiji period, see Shiina 1988, especially Figure 7 in p. 45.

[3] The first building called "art museum" was founded for the first Domestic Industrial Exposition (Naikoku Kangyo Hakurankai [内国勧業博覧会]) in 1877.

organisers remained pivotal to the Museum's management; the Museum continued to accommodate a greater number of art groups in its new annexe opened in the same year. In 1981, the number of group exhibitions exceeded 200 and since then has never dropped below that level. The original character of the Museum was completely restored when all the collection-based curatorial practices were transferred to a newly-established institution of the metropolitan government – the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Contemporary Art (Tokyo-to Gendai Bijutsukan [東京都現代美術館]) – in 1995. Today the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum remains the most typical model of the empty museum.

Most empty museums were established after World War II, and so were most prefectural museums. Many opened during the so-called "museum boom" between the late 1960s and the 1990s. The museum boom witnessed a dramatic increase in a wide range of new museums. Out of 5,496 museums established in Japan since

Meiji (1868–1912)	118
Taisho (1912–26)	159
Showa (1926–August 1945)	354
Showa (August 1945–93)	4,865
1945–49	65
1950–54	245
1955–59	252
1960–64	306
1965–69	524
1970–74	774
1975–80	724
1981–85	750
1986–90	725
1991–93	500

Total	5,496

Table 1.1: New Museums Established between 1868 and 1993
(Based on Ito 1993, 137; Kurata and Yajima 1997, 28.)

the Meiji period, 4,865 were post-war institutions (see Table 1.1). At the height of the museum boom, more than 700 new institutions were added every five years.

After the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, no prefectural art museum was established until two institutions – the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (Kanagawa-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan [神奈川県立近代美術館], 1951) and the Aichi Prefectural Art Museum (Aichi-kenritsu Bijutsukan [愛知県立美術館], 1955) – were built in the 1950s. The latter was the first prefectural institution that explicitly conformed to the pre-war forerunner.[4] Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, this empty museum tradition remained persistently influential on the curatorial practices of a number of institutions in the subsequent decades. In the 1960s, 4 prefectural art museums opened; and all of them shared some of the characteristics of so-called emptiness (see Table 1.2). In the next three decades, 39 new institutions were established, among which the ones most explicitly conforming to the Metropolitan-Art-Museum style included the prefectural art museums in Hyogo (1970), Wakayama (1970), Oita (1977), and Miyagi (1981). As the number of these institutions increased dramatically and as their characteristic emptiness became more evident, Japanese museum experts started to criticise these museums for their differences from Western models. They were scornfully regarded as "empty" because of the absence of those features considered inherent and necessary to the Western museums.

---

[4] Before the opening of the Aichi Museum, two municipal museums had already been established in the style of the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum: The Takamatsu City Museum of Art (Takamatsu-shiritsu Bijutsukan [高松市立美術館], 1949) and the Takaoka Art Museum (Takaoka-shi Bijutsukan [高岡市美術館], 1951).

1920s	1	Tokyo Metropolitan (1926)
1930s	0	(Kyoto Municipal [1933], Osaka Municipal [1936])
1940s	0	
1950s	2	Kanagawa Kindai* (1951), Aichi (1955)
1960s	4	Yamagata (1964), Nagasaki (1965), Nagano Shinano (1966), Hiroshima (1968)
1970s	13	Ehime (1970), Hyogo Kindai (1970), Wakayama Kindai (1970), Tochigi (1972), Nara (1973), Gunma (1974), Chiba (1974), Kumamoto (1976), Hokkaido Kindai (1977), Oita (1977), Fukui (1977), Yamanashi (1978), Yamaguchi (1979)
1980s	15	Miyagi (1981), Toyama (1981), Hokkaido Asahikawa (1982), Saitama (1982), Gifu (1982), Mie (1982), Saga (1983), Ishikawa (1983), Fukushima (1984), Shiga Kindai (1984), Fukuoka (1985), Hokkaido Hakodate (1986), Shizuoka (1986), Okayama (1988), Ibaragi (1988)
1990s	11	Tokushima Kindai (1990), Hokkaido Obihiro (1991), Aichi 2nd** (1992), Kochi (1993), Nigata Kindai (1993), Akita Kindai (1994), Wakayama Kindai 2nd (1994), Miyazaki (1995), Tokyo Gendai*** (1995), Hiroshima 2nd (1996), Shimane (1999)
2000–02	1	Iwate (2001)
Total	47	

Table 1.2: Prefectural Art Museums in Japan (1926–2002)

* "Kindai": Museum of Modern Art

** "2nd": Regenerated as new institutions

*** "Gendai": Museum of Contemporary Art

The modern form of museum originated in Europe. The conception of a public institution to collect and display works of art first developed in relation to the specific social and cultural conditions of modern European society. The first institution of this kind did not emerge until the mid-eighteenth century, when the private collections of royalty and other privileged classes became progressively available for public viewing in many European countries. In Japan, the art museum was explicitly "imported" from the West as an institution judged to be essential for a modern, civilised nation-state. It was during two specific periods when Japan was obsessed with "westernisation" (in its widest sense which includes various processes associated with "westernisation" such as "modernisation", "industrialisation", and "democratisation") that museums were introduced and

developed most actively in Japan. The first period was the latter half of the nineteenth century. Under the Tokugawa shogunate, Japan had refused any diplomatic relations with other countries except very restricted contacts with Holland and China for more than two centuries, and there was little chance that any innovations could be introduced to Japan from any other part of the world. It was not until the "isolation policy" ("*sakoku*" 「鎖国」) [5] was virtually abandoned in 1854 and the new imperial regime of Emperor Meiji (1868–1912) launched a comprehensive "westernisation", "modernisation", and "industrialisation" programme that Western culture flooded into the country to affect every aspect of its society. The *samurai* feudalism was restructured into Western-style constitutional monarchy; Western technologies modernised industry; public services such as the postal service and railway system were launched according to Western models; and people started to wear Western-style clothes. In the midst of these social and cultural changes, the museum system was introduced to Japan as a Western institution and concept. The second period coincided with the post-war reconstruction and further development of Japanese society and economy. The defeat in the Pacific War in August 1945 brought about the first colonial experience to Japan. Under the leadership of the American occupation, every social and cultural aspect of Japan was progressively restructured according to liberal and democratic Western models. The divine Emperor was denied his deity, parliamentary democracy was reintroduced, universal suffrage was granted for the first time in Japanese history, and a wide range of Western culture and technology

---

[5] This was one of the key policies of the Tokugawa shogunate (1603-1867). In fear of the propagation of Christianity and the rise of European powers, this policy was enacted in 1649; and it was virtually abolished in 1854 because of the increasing pressures from the United States and European countries.

was positively brought in. Viewed against this historical background, the empty museum discourses reproached the distinctive "emptiness" developed by Japanese museums for failing to be properly and completely "westernised".

The main purpose of my thesis is to examine the introduction of public art museums to modern Japan and the development of their characteristic emptiness and in so doing argue that they do not provide evidence for "failed westernisation" or "misinterpretation" but should be interpreted as a complex process of "transculturation" (Pratt 1992). I use the terms "westernisation" and "transculturation" as antonyms in my subsequent discussion. For the former is based on the hierarchical understanding of different cultures that the latter explicitly challenges. · To assume that Japanese culture should have been essentially "westernised" when Western culture was introduced to Japan and *not* to suspect that Western culture might have been possibly "japanised" would indicate a strong belief in a dichotomic conception of the relations between a dominant West and a subordinate Japan. It is all too often assumed that when two cultures encounter one another the subordinate of the two will be overwhelmed by the dominant other and the dominant culture will absorb the subordinate. Accordingly, elements of Japanese culture may be introduced to the West to be enriched by them, but it would never be "japanised". The adoption of the Japanese elements would not destabilise the hierarchical relationship between these cultures. "Transculturation" deconstructs this hierarchy which enables the discourse of "westernisation" and describes the relations of the two cultures more precisely. It is absolutely true that a succession of modern Japanese governments pursued "westernisation" as a "policy" especially in those two important periods for the development of Japanese museums. However, what actually happened in the

pursuit of the "westernisation" policy revealed mutual and interactive relations between Western and Japanese cultures – not a one-way process of the "westernisation" of Japanese culture. The characteristic emptiness of Japanese museums is more accurately interpreted in the context of such processes of transculturation. The art museum – a product of modern Western culture – was adapted to the unfamiliar cultural and social circumstances of post-Meiji Japan and developed a distinctive character in the context of the particular cultural, social, and political dynamics specific to this "alien" culture. The product of a foreign culture and society – the art museum – was re-interpreted and modified in the course of its conflicts, negotiations, and interactions with Japanese cultural and social conditions; the "emptiness" of the museums being one of the characteristics developed in this process.

The socio-cultural contexts specific to modern Japan require certain modifications to the definition of transculturation theory that I have just described. In modern Japanese history, the periods in which the relatively direct and explicit contacts with Western culture played an important role in the development of public art museums were limited to the decades just after the Meiji Restoration (1867) and the end of World War II (1945). I expand the concept of transculturation in two particular ways in order to apply it more effectively to my empirical studies of the Japanese cases. First, this concept may be redefined to theorise the post-war development of the "empty" museums which is concerned not so much with the introduction and modification of Western models as with the transformation of the Japanese hybrid institutions themselves. In this thesis, I present two distinct models of the "empty" institutions – one associated with the art groups and the other with the curators. However, these models were translated

into variant forms in the course of their adoption to different regions all over the country. Second, this concept may be expanded to indicate the particular contingent processes in which different agents in the art field were formed and they interacted. My concern here is associated with Bourdieu's concept of "field" (Bourdieu 1993; 1996). This concept substantiates what may be vaguely perceived as the "art world" by considering it as an autonomous sphere of cultural production, distribution, and reception consisting of the shifting, temporary, and complex relations between a wide range of "agents" such as artists, critics, dealers, and art lovers. Each field – for instance, that of art, economy, politics, etc. – is structurally homologous but relatively "autonomous" because of a specific concern for which the agents in the field struggle (i.e. cultural goods, economic profits, political power, etc.), a particular set of laws or rules the agents must follow, and a specific form of "capital" or "habitus" required for the participation in the "games" played in the field. I identify two distinctive stages of transculturation associated with the Japanese art field. One concerns those processes through which various agents of the art field were formed and developed in relation to localised socio-cultural conditions. The development of the art groups most clearly shows these transcultural processes. They initially developed as a complex cultural mix of Japanese artistic traditions and Western practices in the early twentieth century, and their further development later in the century shows how these groups of artists were transformed according to temporally and geographically localised conditions of different Japanese regions. The second set of processes concern the interactive relations between these hybrid agents. The ongoing struggles between different agents are important elements of Bourdieu's conception of the formation of the art field in the West. These agents in Japan developed a particular form of art

field through the distinctive ways in which conflicts and negotiations took place between them.

1.2. The Structure and Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis consists of six further chapters (Chapters 2–7) and a concluding chapter (Chapter 8) that discusses how the empty museums developed in the mutual and interactive relations of "transculturation" between Western and Japanese cultures. Taken as a whole, the main six chapters may be considered as three sets of two chapters. Chapters 2 and 3 are devoted to clarifying the critical stance that I take in my subsequent analysis of the development of the empty museums in Japan. In Chapter 2, I review and examine the current criticisms of empty museums by Japanese museologists to contrast them to my critical concerns informed by a recent stream of museum studies growing increasingly popular in the English-speaking world – the "new museology". This new current of museology is distinguished by its attitude toward the "classic goals" that every museum was once universally and unconditionally expected to achieve – to collect and display artefacts for the education of the public. While the old museology essentially focuses on the methods to fulfill these ultimate purposes, its new counterpart concerns a wider range of issues involving the re-examination of the "classic goals" themselves, broadly inter-disciplinary approaches to a wide range of subjects concerning the museum, and the various current political concerns around class, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and post-colonialism. By contrast, the current mode of the empty museum discourse is predominantly associated with museologists schooled in the traditional form of museum studies. Its main concern is to argue that the Japanese institutions fail to recognise the significance of the

"classic goals" of the museum and to take the initiative in collecting and displaying works of art in accordance with Western models. This reflects a hierarchical and dichotomous understanding of the relations between the "advanced" West and "backward" Japan. The concept of "transculturation" is used to dissect this cultural hierarchy.

The third chapter introduces selected theoretical perspectives of the new museology on which I draw in the following chapters. My theoretical concerns here are especially focused on the museological discourses informed by three theorists – Jürgen Habermas, Pierre Bourdieu, and Michel Foucault. Their theoretical perspectives – Habermas's concept of the "public sphere", Bourdieu's examination of the museum's exclusivity in reference to "cultural capital", and Foucault's concern with the relations between culture and liberal government, and his concept of "*epistemes*" – are all useful resources for reinterpreting museum practices in relation to diverse cultural and historical dimensions. This chapter also examines how the art museum, as an institution and a concept, developed specifically in relation to the social and cultural environment of the modern West. This clarifies exactly in what sense this particular institution may be regarded as a "modern" and "Western" invention and what kind of modernity and Western elements it carried – or lost on its way – when it was introduced to the alien environment of the Orient.

My concern then moves on to empirical studies of the development of Japanese museums that yielded the so-called "empty museums". Each of the four chapters (Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7), following the first two theoretically orientated chapters, discusses one of the four significant periods that I identify in one and half a centuries of the empty museum phenomenon. Chapters 4 and 5 – the second set of two chapters – concern the early period of modern Japan before World War II. The

first focuses on the establishment of "the Bunten" (「文展」) in 1907 as the official art exhibition modeled on the French Salon. The Salon, the competitive exhibition of contemporary art annually sponsored by the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, had been established as a prestigious and popular official event in Paris by the mid-eighteenth century. Japanese bureaucrats leading the "westernisation" and "modernisation" project of government under the reign of Emperor Meiji (i.e. Meiji era [1868–1912]) decided to adopt this system of official art exhibition into their "modern" nation. However, the Bunten exhibition did not simply replicate the French Salon; on the contrary, it developed its peculiarities distinguished from the Western model in the process of transculturation. I direct our attention to two particular elements that played the most important roles in orientating the transcultural characteristics of the Japanese Salon. One is the invention and development of "art" ("*bijutsu*" 「美術」) which coincided with the comprehensive modernisation of various aspects of Japanese society under the "westernisation" and "industrialisation" policy of Meiji governments. A series of current studies reveals the origin of "*bijutsu*" as a modern term and concept invented in the process of translating Western words and ideas of "art". As a consequence, the Bunten exhibition focused on three categories of art ("Japanese-style painting", "Western-style painting", and "sculpture") which were all newly invented forms of art, associated with artistic practices common in the West and distinguished from the categories of traditional Japanese art practices. Nevertheless, this new cultural field developed as a hybrid of Western and Japanese cultural elements rather than as an embodiment of Western influences. I note two issues concerning this cultural field, which characterised the Bunten and which I develop further in the later chapters. One is a split between the traditional arts, associated with the

Imperial Museums in the three major cities, and the new arts associated with the annual Bunten exhibition; the second is the development of "art groups" and their particular power structure associated with the *iemoto* system.

The fifth chapter examines the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, the first case of an "empty museum", which opened in 1926. The main purpose of this chapter is to present an alternative view to the currently common criticism which regards this institution to be a result of the Western models misunderstood by Japanese and the very origin of the subsequent cases of "failed westernisation". The Metropolitan Museum became "empty" not through misunderstanding or by mistake; it was due to policies positively chosen and applied in circumstances specific to contemporary Japan. To be more precise, the "emptiness" materialised for the first time within this institution was closely related to the characteristic composition of *bijutsu* and the distinctive world of the thriving art groups. The split between the pre-modern and modern forms of art and the art group system left post-Meiji art unhistoricised. The Museum was established and developed by the initiative of the art groups and functioned to serve their prosperity; it was caused neither by mistake nor by accident, but was meant to be so. The correlation between the empty museums, the art groups, and the unhistoricised nature of modern art continued until a new variation of empty museum opened in Kanagawa Prefecture – adjacent to Tokyo – in 1951.

The third and final set of two chapters (Chapters 6 and 7) discusses the situation after the end of World War II. I divide the post-war period in two in the late 1960s/early 1970s. This division marks the periods "before" and "after" the beginning of the "museum boom". In Chapter 6, my concern is with two public art museums built in the 1950s – before the boom. One is the Aichi Prefectural Art

Museum which was established in the style of the Metropolitan Art Museum in 1955, and the other is the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (1951) which pioneered a new type of empty museum. Because of their common lack of collections and permanent displays, these institutions are likely to be perceived as identical. However, there is one crucial difference between them; while the Aichi Museum had no curatorial expert and devoted its galleries to the art groups as the Metropolitan Art Museum did, the Kanagawa Museum, managed by the leadership of its own specialist staff, refused any exhibitions organised by outsiders including the art groups. In addition to the continuing development of the art groups and the issue of modern art remaining unhistoricised, my argument in this chapter focuses on the introduction and development of curatorial authority in the museum space. The curator, "*gakugei-in*" (「学芸員」) was a museum profession which was invented by the Museum Law (*hakubutsukan-ho* [博物館法]) in 1951. The emptiness in the Kanagawa Museum and other "museums of modern art" was characteristically associated with this new interest group in the museum space. In previous chapters, I will have discussed the correlation between the art group system and the development of empty museums; in this chapter, my focus is on the characterisation of emptiness associated with the curator and on the position of this new profession in the art field in relation to other agents – art groups and academic critics.

The seventh chapter deals with further development of the empty museums during the museum boom. My concern here is slightly different from the previous chapters which focused on the establishment of new "empty" institutions. In this chapter, I am concerned not with the establishment of the museums but with the process of their transformation. It is true that many empty museums of both the

Metropolitan and the Kanagawa types were established during this period; and there was certainly a growing body of criticism of those institutions by Japanese museologists from the late 1960s onwards. However, what is characteristic about the boom-time development is the fact that only a few museums maintained their initial curatorial practices of total dependency on the temporary exhibitions of outside organisations with no collections or permanent displays. For both old and new establishments – including the three cases discussed in earleier chapters – it became more common to develop permanent collections, to display them, and to procure some curatorial staff. The empty museums transformed and diversified in relation to their own characteristics developed in the unique configuration of the art field of the local area. The appointment of curators affected the dynamics of the local art world. These were now governed by the relations between curators and local artists attached to the art group system. The transformation of "empty museums" resulted from the way the relations between curators and local artists developed. The case study in this chapter is the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts (Tochigi-kenritsu Bijutsukan [栃木県立美術館]). It was established at the early stage of the boom (1972), but my focus is on the early 1980s as the time when the Museum showed the most intense and controversial case of the interactions between the curators and the local artists.

The final chapter (Chapter 8) draws together all the different issues discussed in this thesis and reiterates the processes of transculturation through which public art museums were characteristically developed in modern Japan. Furthermore, I note the implications of my analyses for the model of the development of the art field formulated by Bourdieu. My argument here is that the particular trajectory of the Japanese art field and the further development of its localised variations

indicate the significance of the localised contingencies which, in their turn, highlight the cultural relativity of the processes through which, in Bourdieu's account, the autonomy of Western art was organised and secured.

1.3. Research Strategy and Methods

My research findings are based on two main sources of information about the development of Japanese public art museums – the archival and literary sources retrieved from libraries, museums, prefectural archives, and personal holdings, and the interviews I conducted with Japanese scholars, artists, and museum staff. To a certain extent, secondary sources were available from the substantial Japanese collections of the academic libraries of Britain including the SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies) Library in London and the Bodleian Japanese Library in Oxford. Nevertheless, for the purpose of more extensive and specialised data collection, I made four trips to Japan, spending approximately four months there between 1997 and 2001. The first two trips (in 1997 and 1999) were relatively short visits that mainly focused on the search for secondary sources in order to grasp a precise overview of the development of public art museums in post-war Japan and to expand my understanding of the historical background of their post-war development as exemplified by the art museums in the Meiji, the Taisho, and the early Showa periods. In the third (two and a half months in 2000) and the fourth visits (a month in 2001), I conducted a more extensive research involving archival work and personal interviews for the empirical chapters of the thesis concerned with four art museums – the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art, the Aichi Prefectural Museum, and the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts.

For my archival research of these "prefectural" museums, I frequented several public institutions that were commonly run by local authorities. Each prefecture had its own prefectural library, prefectural archives, and prefectural assembly library, whose collections of books, local periodicals, official reports, and unpublished documents were all essential to my further understanding of the socio-cultural context of the regions in which the prefectural art museums were developed. Moreover, most museums are now equipped with the libraries specialising in publications and unpublished documents specifically related to these museums and the artistic development of their local areas. These libraries particularly facilitated my research.

However, in the course of my archival and literary research, it became evident that the amount of documented evidence regarding the establishment of prefectural art museums that was available through these institutions was limited. There are two reasons for this. One is that only a small part of the process of the museums' development was documented and publicised. In many cases, especially at the early stage of the post-war development of the prefectural art museums, local authorities and the ad hoc committees responsible for the art museum projects did not consistently produce either official or unofficial reports to follow up their decision-making processes. The second reason is that, even when the outcomes of the meetings were printed, these printed materials were not intentionally collected and preserved by public institutions. Some were lost, and others remain in the possession of individuals. For example, it was only from the end of the 1990s, stimulated by the fiftieth anniversary of the Museum in 2001, that the Kanagawa Museum started to systematically and professionally develop its archives (Mizusawa 2000).

I organised personal interviews with those who were involved in the establishment/development of the museums concerned precisely in order to resolve these problems. I had two main objectives for conducting these 14 interviews in the spring of 2000 and the summer of 2001. The first was to extract information and to clarify the particular details that were not accessible in any documented sources available. The second objective was to locate the documents which were not held by public institutions and to identify useful contacts who might have a good knowledge of the issues that I was concerned with. These objectives were well achieved. I managed to gain access to most living key figures associated with the museums of my concern, and I believe that the lack of documented sources was well compensated for by the rich information provided by the interviewees who kindly spared a considerable amount of time for my research.

The interviewees I chose for the case studies of the empirical chapters mainly consist of particular types of "agents" of the Japanese art field – members of the management and curatorial staff of the museums. My decision to interview these agents, and not other important agents of the field, such as art groups, artists, audience, etc., is due to two main reasons. The first reason concerns with my principal focus on the processes in which the "empty museums" were established and managed. My initial contacts when I started my queries were those institutions themselves, and it was through these first contacts, most of whom worked inside the museums, that my interview list was expanded. The second reason is related to the fact that it was not until the later stage of my research that the relevance of Bourdieu's concept of the art field to my empirical findings was fully recognised. Nevertheless, I believe that this partiality in the choice of interviewees has been well compensated by a wide range of the documented

resources associated with various agents of the Japanese art field that I attract attention here and there in my analyses.

Chapter 2

Current Criticisms of the Empty Museums and Transculturation

2. 1. Introduction

The first two chapters of this thesis introduce the theoretical perspectives which inform my discussion of the development of "empty museums" and their significance in the cultural and social contexts of modern Japan. These perspectives draw on the "new museology" which has arisen, as Peter Vergo (1989) maintains in the introduction to *The New Museology*, as a response to "a state of widespread dissatisfaction with the 'old' museology, both within and outside the museum profession" (3). In this chapter, I argue that the different critical approaches to the issue of "empty museums" taken by their critics and by my analysis here are associated with the distinctions between the "old" and the "new" forms of the discipline. The received empty-museum discourses are affiliated with the critical concerns of the former approach, while my discussion will be very much informed by the latter.

The "old museology", Vergo argues, is characterised by its unswaying belief in the "classic goals" of the museum and its consequent focus on the improvement of methods for the achievement of these indisputable tasks. The "classic goals" of the museum are, in the simplest terms, "to collect, conserve and interpret art, technology, science, culture and history for the education and enjoyment of the public" (Kaplan 1994b, 6). These goals are regarded as so self-evidently true that they are equated with the essential functions of the museum itself. Therefore, the traditional museology is concerned not so much with probing the unquestionable

"purposes" of museums themselves as with "museum methods" (Vergo 1989, 3). Museum methods are viewed as the techniques needed to achieve the self-evident goals more efficiently, including the methods of administration, conservation, registration, display, and public relations. The history of museums that typically accompanies these concerns consists in evolutionary accounts of the modern form of the museum, describing how the glorious struggles and achievements of selfless great men contributed to the establishment of the public cultural institution from ancient Greece through the Enlightenment and the development of civil societies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Pointon 1994b, 2).

A useful example of the literature of the "old" museology is *The Museum: In Search of a Useable Future* by Alma S. Wittlin (Wittlin 1970). Along with its "direct predecessor",[1] *The Museum, Its History and Its Tasks in Education*, published in 1949, this is one of the most influential works written in English on Western museums, which typically represents the characteristics of the traditionalist approach. As a formally trained curator and experienced museum educationalist, Wittlin is concerned with the practical issues of museum management, curatorial practices, pedagogic programmes, and public relations. The concluding chapter therefore suggests a "renewal" programme for the museum to solve the problems identified in these areas. Although a considerable proportion of the volume is devoted to an historical account of the development of the museum, this evidently follows the conventions of the old museology. It examines the characteristics of the proto-museums in contrast to their modern, public

---

[1] In her preface to the 1970 publication, Wittlin herself admits that it is directly based on the 1949 volume (Wittlin 1970, x). She points out two major changes: one is her focus shifted from Europe to America and the other is the expansion of the historical chapters, including the post-World-War-II period.

counterparts, and traces the process through which the establishment of new public spaces for cultural objects, and the reform projects conducted by prescient institutions or individuals, led – teleologically – to the present form of the modern public museum.[2] Wittlin then calls for further reform and development in order to better enable the museum to fulfil its historic tasks, but does not call these tasks themselves into question.

The new museological approach, by contrast, questions and re-examines the "classic goals" of the institution, and is concerned more with "purposes" than "museum methods", and encourages inter-disciplinary approaches to museum studies. To elaborate the characteristics of the new museology, I briefly review four of its distinctive aspects. First, the new museology brings together social and cultural perspectives to provide a more contextually specific account of the historical development of the museum. This historical approach is distinguished from that of the old museology in the sense that it locates the significance of museum developments in the particular social and cultural conditions of particular times instead of evaluating those developments from the perspective of their contribution to the predetermined history of the museum with its current purposes and functions. The history of the museum as "a history of the selfless generosity of a series of great men" undergoes intensive critique in the new museology; such individuals are by no means ignored, but they appear "as part of a discursive account of cultural formation rather than as figures of a gallery of liberal heroes" (Pointon 1994b, 2). The complexities of their significance is opened up in relation to their social status and cultural background, their position within a range of

---

[2] For example, the fifth chapter most ostentatiously focuses on "efforts of reform" from the turn of the century to the 1960s as its title suggests.

governmental strategies, and their interactions with public morality and instruction. Moreover, this re-consideration of the museum has highlighted what may now be understood as the predecessors of the museum in their own right. Such pre-museum-age exhibitions as the semi-public displays of the collections of royal families or wealthy individuals and the public entertainments of fairs had been mentioned only as representing "primitive" stages in the museum's evolutionary development, but their significance is now re-evaluated in their own right in their contemporary circumstances.

Secondly, in relation to the first point, the new museology relocates the study of the museum as a part of the study of a much wider range of exhibitionary institutions and practices in the past and modern times, including religious rituals, princely galleries, curiosity cabinets, international expositions, department stores, fun fairs, and theme parks. In contrast, the traditional museology is based on "exclusion" of and "differentiation" from these "others". The standard approach regards the museum as essentially representing a unique, self-contained institution with its unique purposes and tasks, and the museum therefore is distinguished from its "others" – both its predecessors (ancient Greek temples and courtly presentations) and contemporaries (working-class entertainments and commercial fairs). The new approach draws attention to these non-museums which have hitherto been neglected and examines their "ongoing relations" to museums. The museum does not develop simply by evolving out of its predecessors and differentiating itself from its contemporary counterparts; the institution always develops by interacting and negotiating with these "others".

The third characteristic of the new museology is its broadly inter-disciplinary approach. As I mentioned above, the traditional museology tends to confine

museum studies to certain ready-made disciplines which have not been created especially for museum studies. The museum is distinctively a composite institution which involves a heterogeneous set of academic disciplines – such as archaeology, fine art, ethnology, natural sciences, history, education, politics, and economics. In the old museology, it was unjustly moulded into these ready-made boundaries. By applying an inter-disciplinary approach, however, the new museology – at least to some extent – allows the museum to be placed in a broader and more diverse set of contexts that are artificially kept apart from the study of the museum by traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Finally, the new museology has exposed the histories and current practices of museums to the implications of current political debates exploring the cultural salience of class, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and post-colonialism. This new critical dimension is based on the realisation that the publicness of the museum and its exclusivity are culturally and historically specific to the particular circumstances of modern Europe. This process has revealed the subtlety and complexity of the relationships between the museum and subordinate groups such as women, the working classes, and ethnic minorities.

My engagement in a wide range of perspectives informed by these distinct aspects of the new museology will be fully discussed in Chapter 3. This chapter deals with one particular theoretical perspective associated with this new current in museum studies – "transculturation" – and one particular orientation in the current empty-museum discourses in the discipline of Japanese museology, *hakubutsukanagaku* (博物館学), pertaining to the traditional museology – "westernisation". The main purposes of this chapter are to reveal how the current discourse of the empty museums has been developed in relation to a wide range of

views, beliefs, and assumptions associated with the notion of "westernisation" and to indicate how the theoretical framework of transculturation would present a new dimension in the studies of the "empty museums" characteristically developed in modern Japan.

My usage of "transculturation" here is informed by a post-colonial perspective related to the new-museological tradition – the conception of "contact zones". The issue of post-colonialism is part of the remit of the new museology. The complex relationships between the museum as an institutional system devised by the colonist and the artefacts created by the colonised which were deprived of their original context both geographically and culturally are now part of the main concerns of the new current of museum studies.[3] A contact zone is defined by Mary Louise Pratt (1992) as "the space of colonial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict" (6). This term is contrasted to that of the "colonial frontier" which implies "a European expansionist perspective (the frontier is a frontier only with respect to Europe)". Therefore, she deliberately uses the expression "contact zone" instead which:

---

[3] These studies informed by post-colonialism include Clifford (1997), Kaplan (1994a), and Thomas (1991).

> is an attempt to invoke the spatial and temporal copresence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historic disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect. By using the term "contact," I aim to foreground the interactive, improvisational dimensions of colonial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by diffusionist accounts of conquest and domination. A "contact" perspective emphasizes how subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other. It treats the relations among colonizers and colonized, or travelers and "travelees," not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radically asymmetrical relations of power. [ibid., 6–7]

Transculturation is a phenomenon of the contact zone, indicating the reciprocity and interaction between the dominant and the subordinate cultures and the consequent destabilisation of their power relations:

> Ethnographers have used this term [transculturation] to describe how subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted to them by a dominant or metropolitan culture. While subjugated peoples cannot readily control what emanates from the dominant culture, they do determine to varying extents what they absorb into their own, and what they use it for. [ibid., 6]

This concept emphasises that possibilities of the autonomous selection and adoption of elements from foreign culture are by no means reserved for the prerogative of the dominant culture. While the relations between different cultures are essentially unequal, these relations do not depend on the one-way domination of one to the other but are reciprocal and interactive.

The concept of "westernisation" underlies the current discourse of empty museums by Japanese scholars. The development of public art museums in Japan is essentially interpreted as a part of the long, problematic process of Japan's "westernisation" since the late nineteenth century – most remarkably in the two particular periods of modern Japanese history I mentioned in Chapter 1. One was the Meiji era (1868–1912), in which both "museums" ("*hakubutsukan*"「博物館」) and "art" ("*bijutsu*"「美術」) were institutions and conceptions developed in modern

Europe, and they were introduced to Japan for the purpose of its "westernisation" programme. The other is the period after World War II, when art and museums developed in such force as to bring about the "museum boom" under the "westernisation" policy which was launched by the American occupation army in 1945. I argue, however, that this "westernisation" concept contrasts with the transculturation critique. For it is associated with a hierarchical discourse of the encounters between the dominant Western culture and the subordinate others, as represented by the received hierarchy of "colonizers and colonized" or "travelers and travelees" in colonial circumstances. This concept is hierarchical because it is based on the dualism and separateness of the dominant and the subordinate cultures. Their hierarchical positions are fixed and would never be overturned under any circumstances. In such a discourse, the subordinate culture would be totally overwhelmed by the powerful other; it is compelled to transform by the great undeniable influence of the dominant culture.

2. 2. Empty Museums as a Form of Discourse

The "emptiness" of Japanese museums is neither simply a statement of fact nor an observational comment based on actual statistical data about the development of public art museums in post-war Japan. This characteristic represents a particular discourses of Japanese museologists, who argue the necessity of particular elements if institutions are to be described as museums and point to the "absence" of these elements in the Japanese institutions. The museums are considered as "empty" not because they are *literally* vacant, but because they do not contain several elements which the museologists regard as absolutely essential to the achievement of full museum status. I identify four

elements in current criticisms on this "emptiness": (1) the lack of policies, (2) the lack of collections, (3) the absence of curatorial staff, and (4) low levels of public financial support. While Kurata Kimihiro (倉田公裕: Kurata 1988, 176)[4] and Yonekura Mamoru (米倉守; Yonekura 1986, 173)[5] focus on three of these – artefacts, funds, and curators, Sakurai Kunio (桜井邦夫; Sakurai 1996, 71)[6] mentions all the four elements though using slightly different terms: "I sometimes doubt whether it is really necessary for a local authority to maintain a museum without soul (purposes), blood (money), flesh (artefacts), and, what is more, with only a few curators to function as its brain". However, the "empty museums" by no means completely lack these elements. In most cases, the "empty" institutions contain these "essentials", but in a different way and to different degrees from Western museums; otherwise, there are some alternatives to those four elements.

Regarding the first absent element, no museum was in fact established without any "policy" statement. It is an obligation for a local authority, declared by the Museum Law (Hakubutsukan Ho [博物館法], 1951), to enact bylaws to regulate detailed matters concerning the management of new museums established under its auspices (art. 8). Although the majority of public museums were not officially registered as "museums" under the Law and, therefore, were exempt from the regulation,[7] local authorities invariably laid down bylaws and rules to provide

---

[4] Kurata was Director of the Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art and Professor of Museology at Meiji University.

[5] Yonekura is an art critic and Professor of the Tama Art University in Tokyo. He is now also Director of the Matsumoto City Museum of Art (Matsumoto-shi Bijutsukan [松本市美術館]) in Nagano Prefecture which opened in April 2002.

[6] Sakurai is a curator of the Ota Ward Folk Museum (Ota-kuritsu Kyodo Hakubutsukan [大田区立郷土博物館]), who now also teaches at the Komazawa University (Komazawa Daigaku [駒沢大学]) in Tokyo.

[7] According to the statistics of the Ministry of Education in 1990 (Seki 1993, 39), public museums (excluding national museums) numbered 1,968, only 387 of which

for the establishment and management of their new institutions. Those regulations commonly prescribe that the ultimate purpose of a museum should be "to contribute to the development of the education, learning, and culture of citizens"[8] and that the main curatorial concern should focus on three kinds of arts – local art, Japanese modern art, and Western art.[9] The main concern of the museum is to rent its galleries to external organisations which wish to sponsor temporary exhibitions. For this purpose, detailed rules and regulations have been produced. However, these documented policies are usually not valued by Japanese museologists because they lack the specification of curatorial tasks associated with collection, display, and education. The museologists consider these tasks "essential" for any fully-functional museum; therefore, they regret their absence in the current policies. In the empty-museum discourse, this "absence" of curatorial policies causes the lack of the next two elements – collections and curators.

The second element of the museologists' critique, the lack of collections, is grounded not simply on the actual figures of museum holdings. It is true that many regional art museums characteristically started without substantial collections, and that the making of a collection and of a museum proceeded simultaneously. In many cases, the museums failed to amass a large number of artefacts in the short time before their opening. In the 1980s, quite a few public art museums bought eminent European and American paintings and sculptures for astronomical prices as eye-catchers, but most of them had run out of funds before they managed to form substantial collections. As a consequence, most public art museums, especially those built before the 1980s, were not equipped with

---

were legitimately called "museums".

[8] For the examples of the bylaws of local authorities, see Seki 1993, 76–78.

"permanent galleries" to make regular exhibitions of their acquisitions. This particular type of administration is called "box administration" ("*hakomono gyosei*" 「箱物行政」). This critically describes a common practice of post-war Japanese cultural administration at both the national and the local levels, where a number of "buildings" (i.e. "boxes") of various kinds (e.g. concert halls, tourism centres, the centres of industry and commerce, museums, etc.) have been established without much consideration being given to their contents (Fujita 1985, 1). The establishment and management of public museums are considered typically to replicate the "box administration".

> The Japanese conception of founding a museum works the other way around – especially that of the administration. It may be natural that the scripture (concept) essentially comes first, then there must be a monk (specialist) and the principal image (collection), and finally a temple (an art museum) is built. However, a temple (a box) somehow comes first in Japan. After having started to build it, the officials start to look for a suitable Buddha (an eye-catcher) to put in. . . . This may be the reason why museums have not developed as much as it is expected. It should direct outward from the inside – that we want to found such a museum based on such a concept, for which we need such materials and such facilities to pursue such and such projects. [Kurata 1988, 34]

Nevertheless, the fact is that no empty museum was *completely* devoid of collections when the empty museum critiques became prevalent among the Japanese museologists during the museum boom of the 1970s and the 80s. None of the "empty" institutions established before the boom was completely indifferent to the making of collections. Even the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, which is often regarded as the origin of the empty museum, held more than a hundred artefacts including paintings, sculptures, crafts, and calligraphy before it started to systematically amass its collection in the mid-1970s.[10] In the period of the

---

9 See Kurata 1988, 32–33.

10 According to the catalogue complied in 1965 (Tokyo-to Kyoiku Iinkai c1965), the

museum boom, no art museum was established *completely* empty without any collection whatsoever; and more institutions developed "permanent galleries" for their collection displays. The size of the collections of the public art museums is now typically in thousands, not in hundreds or dozens.

The main concern of the empty museum discourse in respect to collections is not so much about the number of works of art held by museums as about their "quality". What makes the Japanese museologists regard certain museums as "empty" is not simply the physical lack of collections but also and more significantly the lack of a certain "system" in the existing collections to make what is otherwise a mere miscellany of objects worthwhile.

> The collections of an art museum should be a systematic and rational assembly of attractive works beyond the capacity of the individual level. They are evaluated according to the criteria such as the excellence of the artefacts, their quantity, and the systematic practice of collection within the field specialised by the art museum. In other words, the value of the museum collections depends on the correlation between the artefacts – i.e. "the structure of the collection", which may be rephrased as the attraction of the permanent exhibition. [Kurata 1988, 116]

Of course, the value of each object and the quantity of the collection are important; but, even if the collection satisfies those two conditions, it is not considered "substantial" without any "system" or "structure". Systematic collections are essential for a museum to organise an exhibition to display selected works from its holdings. Although the public art museums usually *did* have original collections, those artefacts were rarely displayed in public. Moreover, this preference for systematic collections and permanent displays neglects the significance of what occupies the museum space in their place – temporary exhibitions. They mainly

---

Museum held: 24 Japanese-style paintings, 88 Western-style paintings, 9 watercolours and drawings, 10 sculptures, 10 crafts, and 5 calligraphies. Except for a few objects, they were all acquired after World War II.

include two types – the "*kikakuten*" (企画展) and the "art group exhibition". The former type, typically sponsored by mass media companies, displays a large number of exhibits gathered from all over the world; the latter is organised by a group of artists who exhibit their latest works. These exhibitions have nothing much to do with the nexus of systematic collections and permanent displays; the collection-based curatorial practices are not required for organising the *kikakuten* and the art group exhibitions.

The museologists' third point concerns the absence of curators, the only officially licensed profession in the museum space. According to 1993 statistics, more than 80% of the museums have three or less curators, while 32% have none. National rules to supplement the Museum Law, "Criteria Concerning the Foundation and Management of Public Museums" (1971), require at least six curators of the public museums; but only 10% satisfy this requirement.[11] Although the number of curators is thus proved to be lower than the legal demand, this respect of the absence of curators in Japanese museums is closely related to particular curatorial practices the museologists expect from those institutions. The current practices of "empty" museums do not require the expertise of the curatorial staff attached to the museums. The specialist knowledge of curators is associated with particular kinds of museum practice; therefore, the presence of these professionals is considered an essential component of museum management only when the museum takes a certain form. The management and practice of those institutions which focus on "temporary exhibitions" instead of collection-based

---

[11] The figures are taken from Seki 1993, 75, based on the data of Nihon Hakubutsukan Kyokai, ed., *Nihon no hakubutsukan* (Tokyo: Nihon Hakubutsukan Kyokai, 1993). The survey is based on 1,253 public and private museums in Japan.

permanent exhibitions do not need these forms of curatorial expertise. The temporary exhibition relies on "curatorial authority" *outside* the museums. The *kikakuten* exhibition consults the private companies specialising in displays and exhibitions, art critics, or academics. Art group exhibitions would be organised by members of their own hanging committees. Curators attached to the museums are not essential for these exhibitions; therefore, I shall argue, the "absence" of these specialists need not be problematised.

The fourth element of the empty-museum critique, the low levels of public financial support, may seem to contradict the fact that the high growth of the Japanese economy was one of the decisive factors of the post-war museum boom. However, as many critics point out, both local and national governments generously spent billions of yen on the construction of the regional art museums, but they became less supportive once the buildings were completed, believing that their task was over. For example, the public art museums in the 1980s were typically allocated ¥1,500,000,000–2,000,000,000 (£7,500,000–10,000.000)[12] for the purchase of artefacts preceding their opening, but the budget was then usually reduced to an amount between a few tens of million yen and a hundred million yen annually.[13] In contrast to their grand opening, they were usually forced to survive on a minimal share of the funds allocated to the whole educational sections of the local

---

[12] My translation between Japanese yen and sterling here is based on a current (in December 2002) approximate exchange rate of £1 = ¥200.

[13] See Ide 1986, 201 and Yonekura 1986, 175. Yonekura mentions some examples of the extremely large budgets that the public art museums allocated to "make up" their original collections on their establishment: Toyama Prefecture (¥2,000,000,000), Fukuoka City (¥1,500,000,000), Yokohama City (¥1,500,000,000), Saitama Prefecture (¥1,200,000,000). He compares those figures to the ¥400,000,000 annual budget shared by four national museums.

authorities. According to Kurata and Yajima Kunio (矢島國男),[14] both museologists based in Meiji University (Meiji Daigaku [明治大学]) in Tokyo, no less than 30% on average of the whole budget of a local authority is allocated to the educational expenditure, of which around 8% goes to social education; and the museum expenditures are merely 3–5% of the social educational budget (Kurata and Yajima 1997). The burst of the bubble economy in the early 1990s made museums' fiscal conditions even worse; the cultural investments of the local authorities were cut down considerably and the number of fee-paying visitors dropped.[15]

However, this funding policy corresponds to the museum management concentrating on the temporary exhibitions sponsored by exterior organisations. "Beautiful boxes" are just enough to serve the purpose of the institutions which rent out their galleries. After opening, those museums sought their resources from the rental gallery business; each temporary exhibition is funded by private sponsorship such as mass media companies and art groups. As far as temporary exhibitions are concerned, the museums are not necessarily short of money; their "business" is going reasonably well. Their galleries are packed with their "customers" all year around and would never be left "vacant" even for a few days. The concern about the low level of public financial support is by no means associated with the rental gallery business; it is specifically related to the money for new purchases to amass collections, organise permanent displays, and hire curators.

Thus the "empty museums" are not at all empty. All the elements – policy, collection, curator, and financial support – that are regarded as "absent" from these

---

[14] Yajima is Professor of Museology at Meiji University.
[15] See Murakami 1997, 74; Oshima 1982, 262; Sakurai 1996, 71–72.

characteristic institutions are in fact "present" there. These "empty" institutions have developed certain policies focusing on the rental gallery business; some art objects are permanently stored there; the galleries are filled with various *kikakuten* and art group exhibitions, funded by exterior resources, which bring about reasonable revenue. Only these elements assume forms that are different from what Japanese museologists expect for the museums. The museologists' critique of the characteristic emptiness is based not on the actual, literal vacancy of the gallery space but on their concern with particular policies, "systematic" collections, curatorial staff, and financial resources for a particular mode of curatorial practice. The emptiness, as a term to describe the current situation of Japanese public art museums, is a discourse which would occur when the critics fail to find what they expected or, more precisely, certain elements in the particular fashions that they expected in the museums. This expectation of the museologists is closely related to "Western ideals". The four elements whose absence is recognised by the critics are what are characteristically present in the museums in Europe and North America. Therefore, the "ideal museum" that Japanese museologists envisage is essentially and self-evidently the kind of public art museum prevalent in the West which holds substantial collections, is equipped with permanent galleries, and is managed by professional curatorial staff.

2.3. "Westernisation" and the Empty Museum Discourse

"Westernisation" is an immanent orientation in the received discourse on empty museums. This discourse is closely related to the "old museology" in its concern with achieving the "classic goals" of museums, improving "museum methods", and engaging in teleological histories of museums. First of all, this

correlation between the empty museum criticisms and the traditional form of Western museology is evidently orientated by the disciplinary framework of Japanese museum studies – "*hakubutsukan-gaku*" – in which the majority of those critical discourses are made. "*Hakubutsukan-gaku*" most commonly indicates a particular academic field associated with the training of curators in university education. In Japan, curatorship (*gakugei-in* [学芸員]) is a national certification which is usually obtained by taking required credits at university.[16] Like a school teacher's licence, it may be acquired by attending a set of lectures and undertaking practical training while a student studies his/her own major in the four-year undergraduate course. The subjects required for curatorship include general museology, the basic theories of education and social education, and audio-visual education. Therefore, most publications of Japanese museology are expected to be used as textbooks in the training of curators at university and are written by the museologists who study and teach various subjects relating to this particular course. These textbooks generally cover a wide range of topics which are related to the subjects required for the training of curators, and their emphasis is put upon the analysis of technical problems and the development of practical methods to achieve the "classic goals" of the museum – to collect, preserve, and display artefacts.[17] These goals are, in fact, proclaimed in the definition of the museum by the "bible" of Japanese museology – the Museum Law (1951):

---

[16] Regarding legal requirements for Japanese curatorship, see Museum Law (Hakubutsukan Ho [博物館法], 1951), ch. 1, art. 5; Enforcement Regulations of the Museum Law (Hakubutsukan Ho Seko Kisoku [博物館法施行規則], 1955), chs. 1, 2, and 4.

[17] For example, Kurata 1979; Kurata and Yajima 1997; Nakamura 1996a; Seki 1993.

> In this law, the "museum" indicates an institution . . . which collects and preserves the artefacts concerning with history, art, folk customs, industry, natural science, etc. and display them for public use under educational considerations . . . [ch. 1, art. 2.1]

In Japanese museological discourse, the insistence on these classic goals inevitably leads to the tendency of "westernisation". For these goals are originally the standards of the Western museums.

As a consequence of this tendency of "westernisation", Japanese museums are criticised in the context of the dichotomy of the "advanced West" and "backward Japan". According to such critiques, Japan is "a backward nation" because of the poor quality of its museums though it rivals "developed" Western nations in the number of museums.[18] Many scholars point to the comparatively short history of the museum in Japan which started only in 1872; in this sense, it is still "a baby" in its "infancy", between one-and-a-half and two centuries behind Europe – that is to say, it is still in the earliest stage of development.[19] A variety of "proofs" of the backwardness of Japan are raised in comparison to the Western counterparts. The backwardness is usually related closely to some of the characteristics of the empty museums (including the four missing elements). For example, Hasegawa Sakae (長谷川栄),[20] a notable museologist and established sculptor, repeatedly criticises

---

[18] Asanobu Sasaki (1982, 274) uses the exact term, "a backward nation" ("*koshinkoku*" 「後進国」), to describe Japan in respect of the conditions of its museums. Also see Kurata and Yajima 1997, 30.

[19] See Kurata 1988, 29, 95; Fujita's statement in *Hakubutsukan Kenkyu* 302 1993, 22.

[20] Hasegawa Sakae worked for the Tokyo National Museum as research/curatorial member of staff between 1952 and 1991, while he also played an active role in contemporary sculpture as a member of an art group, the Kodo Bijutsu Kyokai (行動美術協会). He won the Tanahashi Prize (棚橋賞) in 1980. This prize, named after Father of Japanese museology, Tanahashi Gentaro (棚橋源太郎, 1869–1961), was launched in 1963 by the Japan Museum Association (Nihon Hakubutsukan Kyokai [日本博物館協会]) to award the most remarkable treatises written in the field of museum studies every year.

the tendency of Japanese art museums to purchase a small number of expensive masterpieces without particular collection policies and deplores the situation where Japan alone is excluded from the trend of *eco-musée* and "soft museums" and all other museological currents of the world (i.e. the West).[21] He then adds:

> In our country, a number of public (prefectural and municipal) and private art museums have now been built one after the other. They range over many different kinds from the political institutions which aim at demonstrating the monumental feature of museum architecture to those with a tendency to "masterpiece-ism"[22] in their collections like developing countries. However, I would suggest that we should take this opportunity to normalise the condition of those art museums with an open mind by learning how they should be from our seniors such as France. [Hasegawa 1994, 95–96]

Some refer to the educational activities that Japan needs to develop most in the future when looking at the situation in the West.[23] Murakami Yoshihiko (村上義彦),[24] a retired curator who also lectured museology at the Daito Bunka University (Daito Bunka Daigaku [大東文化大学]), writes that this is the field in which Japan falls behind most and that especially "the diffusion of the learning opportunities offered to younger children by Japanese museums is several decades behind that in Europe and America" (1997, 25). Then he regrets that Japan remains such a "spiritually backward nation" (26).

---

[21] See Hasegawa 1994, 12, 21–22; 1997, 285.

[22] "Masterpiece-ism" ("*meihin-shugi*"「名品主義」) is a common expression to describe the tendency to overestimate the authority of the so-called "masterpieces" and to worship their value blindly without any critical principle. As regards the empty-museum discourse, it specifically indicates passive, ad hoc and piecemeal purchases of reputable works of art without any reference to art historical knowledge or any prospect of art historical collections. This term will be referred to in the next section (2.4) in relation to the art history project.

[23] For example, Hasegawa 1994; 1997; Kurata 1988; Kurata and Yajima 1997, 247; Murakami 1997.

[24] Murakami Yoshihiko successively held various posts of the prefectural and municipal museums in Saitama Prefecture, including Director of the Asaka City Museum (1997–98), after joining the founding member of staff of the Saitama Prefectural Museum as a curator in 1971. He won the Tanahashi Prize in 1991 for

This dichotomous conceptual framework associated with "westernisation" is reinforced by two variations of "westernisation" in the empty museum discourse. One is "modernisation", which contrasts the fully-modernised West with "modernising" Japan. The development of the museums is often discussed in the context of the "modernisation" process Japan has committed itself to since it adopted the policy of "westernisation" and "industrialisation" in the late nineteenth century (see 2.2 and Chapter 3). Oshima Seiji (大島清次),[25] curator and art historian, states:

> the present situation of Japan is one of the too belated tasks of a series of the "modernisation" projects which it has learned from the precedents of the West and practised ever since the Meiji period. [Oshima 1982, 261]

Similarly, Morooka Hirokuma (諸岡博熊),[26] Director of the UCC Coffee Museum, emphasises the necessity for Japan to learn from the still advanced West though it seems to have accomplished part of its learning process. He writes: "During the period when there was a great gap in knowledge between Japan and the developed countries in Europe and America, it was more efficient and important to acquire knowledge to fill the gap than to create new knowledge" (1995, 5). Moreover, he maintains, Japan has to learn creativity now that the gap in knowledge between Japan and the West has been diminished. Humbly and earnestly, Japan has to keep on learning from the ever-advanced West; the museum and other cultural institutions are one of the "modern" necessities that remain neglected and

---

his contribution to the development of Japanese museology.

[25] Oshima Seiji, the Director of the Setagaya Art Museum (Setagaya Bijutsukan [世田谷美術館]), was also deeply involved in the "Tochigi Problem" in the early 1980s as the Director of the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts (Tochigi-kenritsu Bijutsukan [栃木県立美術館]). See Chapter 7.

[26] Morooka Hirokuma is also a visiting professor of the Chukyo Women's University (Chukyo Joshi Daigaku [中京女子大学]) and a vice-president of the Japan Museum-Management Society (Nihon Myujiamu Manejimento Gakkai [日本ミュー

undeveloped unjustly. As Oshima (1982) maintains, there are "belatedly some possibilities for Japan to become a balanced developed country in name and reality" as it seems more and more aware of the significance of cultural administration (261).

The second variation is "culturalisation". By the height of the museum boom in the 1970s and the 1980s, Japan had already been "industrialised" to the extent that it was the second largest economy in the world.[27] In this sense, "westernisation" had been well achieved. However, the "westernisation" and "modernisation" project of post-war Japan included another aspect – "culturalisation". This is an aspect of "westernisation" and "modernisation" which, in the context of post-war debates about democracy, it was argued had not yet been fully developed, and so "culture" and "culturalisation" became the keywords in the establishment of museums in post-war Japan. Many Japanese museologists discuss the increasing importance of culture in the Japanese society and encourage this tendency of "culturalisation". For example, Ueki (*Hakubutsukan Kenkyu* 294, 4) includes "culturalisation" in his four keywords to represent the tendency of the whole Japanese society as well as "information-orienting", "internationalisation", and "ageing".[28] They are aware of the fact that the late 1970s and the 1980s were commonly called "the Age of Culture" or "the Decade of Culture". These terms became prevalent after the so-called "Age-of-Culture Report" (Naikaku Kanbo Naikaku Shingishitsu 1980) was compiled and published under the leadership of Prime Minister Ohira Masayoshi (大平正芳, 1910–80) in 1980, and they were frequently mentioned in discussing the establishment and development of the

---

ジアム・マネジメント学会]).

[27] Japan's GNP became the second largest in the world in 1969.

museum as a public "cultural" institution.

Philologically, "culture" undoubtedly came from the West. The Japanese word for culture, "*bunka*" (「文化」), is an abbreviation of the translated word for "culture" in the Meiji period, "*bunmei-kaika*" (「文明開化」), which means the national policy of "modernisation" and "westernisation". Therefore, it used to contain such meanings as "to be of a European/American fashion" and "to be trendy", which remain even now in such expressions as "*bunka* house" (Western-style house) and "*bunka* cooker" (modern Western-style cooker). This inclination to Western cultures that is implicit in "culture" and "culturalisation" indicates that "Japanese" culture – distinguished from that of the West – is contradictory in terms. For Japan has to be "westernised" in order to be "culturalised".

During the museum boom or the "Age of Culture", the concept of "culturalisation" assumed a distinctive feature as an advanced stage of "westernisation" after "industrialisation". As Ito Toshiro (伊藤寿朗),[29] one of the leading figures among contemporary museologists typically states, it is the second and advanced step that is to come after the first task of industrialisation has been more or less fulfilled.

> The increasing leisure time after the high growth in the economy allowed citizens to spend more time on their hobbies and learning. According to the surveys on what citizens demand of administration, museums including art galleries, zoos, and botanical gardens came to rank high as well as parks on the list.
>
> The local authorities also raised culture as an important policy as a result of completion of such systems as roads, water supplies, sewerage, and schools. It was during this period that the national government started to subsidise the establishment of history and folklore museums all over the country.

---

[28] Other examples include Morooka 1995, 16, 172; Umesao 1991, 122–23, 243.

[29] Ito had long been involved in researches and practices of museum studies as a free lance until he was appointed to Associate Professor of Museology at the Tokyo Gakugei University (Tokyo Gakugei Daigaku [東京学芸大学]) in 1989.

> Moreover, the *kigyo* [enterprises] quickly respond to the rise of culture. More *kigyo* nowadays do not only organise cultural events but also establish their own museums. [1991, 7]

Thus the second stage of "westernisation" was launched in the late 1960s/ early1970s by the public and private sectors, which had focused almost exclusively on economic development for a long time and which now started to recognise the significance of culture. In other words, "culture" does not exist as a component of economic and industrial activities. Therefore, Kita-Kyushu City, a heavily industrialised and polluted city, is called "culture desert", and to build an art museum there means to introduce "culture" into the city.[30] Although it seems clear that the museum boom would not have occurred without the economic success, the situation brought about by industrialisation is not regarded as necessitating "cultural" activities in any degree.

Moreover, "culturalisation", in the empty museum discourse, indicates an intention to increase the level of recognition of the importance of culture. It is in this respect that Japanese culture is often claimed to be backward. A critic states: "I think the museums [i.e. their poor conditions] reflect the cultural level of Japan" (*Hakubutsukan Kenkyu* 302, 22); another writes: "It is commonly said that culture in Japan is more than 100 years behind Europe" (Shimazu 1990, 43). "Culture" in their discourses indicates cultural conditions where the significance of culture may be fully recognised; immediately after those statements, these critics both express their satisfaction with recognising the recent increase in awareness of the importance of "culture" and museums in Japan. Although it is generally agreed that both the Japanese public and administrators have a better understanding of

---

[30] See Nakajima 1986, 9. Also see Isozaki's comment in Isomura and Isozaki 1982, 12.

the significance of the cultural institutions than they used to (Kubouchi 1997, 62; Kurata 1982, 159), the level of their "culturalisation" is still considered far behind the one in the West. Japan has just started to "recognise" the significance of culture and its administration, but the Occidental part of the world has already been fully aware of their significance for a long time. This is discussed also in terms of the mutual understanding of the public and the administrations. Tsuruta Soichiro (鶴田総一郎),[31] a university-based museologist, seems deeply impressed by the museum culture in England during his six-month stay in Leicester. In his reference to the Jorvic Viking Centre in York, he writes, "I was overwhelmed by British culture where the society commonly and fully accepts such a necessity [as to establish museums] and puts it into practice. This experience made me realise the nation and nationality which naturally gave birth to the museum" (Tsuruta 1985, 2).

Regarding the futuristic public art projects in Paris and other French towns, Hasegawa (1994) praises the "generosity" of French people toward such cultural projects in comparison to the Japanese attitude of despising them merely as "wastes":

> Such large-scale "wastes" seem to be generously overlooked by the public because they are the products of artistic activities. . . . As the long tradition of Paris has been steadily developing the mental base of *eco-musée* which involved its citizens, it may not be necessary to give a tedious explanation about the consensus from the beginning when a futuristic work is introduced into the city. [151]

The developed cultural awareness among the public in the West allows Western governments to practice such substantial cultural administrations. Japanese museologists are all envious about the social and cultural conditions of the West

---

[31] Tsuruta was Professor of Museology at Hosei University (Hosei Daigaku [法政大学]) in Tokyo. He stayed at Department of Museum Studies of Leicester University as a visiting research fellow between March and October 1984, and the essay I refer

where both the public and the administrations understand the importance of "culturalisation". Nishino Yoshiaki (西野嘉章), Professor of Museology and Art History at the Tokyo University Museum (東京大学総合研究博物館), deplores the situation of Japanese museums in comparison to French examples: "I am not the only one to adore and sympathise with the attitude of France to tackle the preservation and study of art and cultural heritage led by the Ministry of culture hand in hand with the whole nation" (Nishino 1995, 160), then he maintains: "There should be a lot for Japanese cultural administration to learn from the nation [France] centring their national strategy on culture and technology" (ibid., 111).

The current critique on Japanese museums is thus grounded on the hierarchical understanding of the relationship between Japan and the West. On the "universal" scale of the evolution of museums, the West occupies the ever-advanced position while Japan continuously follows behind it. To be like Western museums accordingly becomes a self-evident "norm" for the Japanese institutions, even though they have developed characteristics different from those in the West. In this "westernisation" discourse, the phenomenon of the "empty museum" is a result of the neglect and misunderstanding of the Western model by Japan – a failure of Japan's "proper westernisation". However, how many non-Western cultures have been successfully and completely westernised so far? Are there any cases under any circumstances in the past that a non-Western culture totally succumbed to the irresistible, overwhelming power of Western cultures? Stefan Tanaka points to the fact that "westernisation" narratives rarely compose success stories: "The various attempts of non-Western cultures to confront and adapt to modern (Western) civilization have been frequently recounted, almost

---

to here was based on his experiences during this period.

always ending in incompletion or tragedy" (Tanaka 1993, 1). These unhappy endings have become predominant not because of the "incompetence" of non-Western cultures in modernising and civilising themselves according to Western models but because of a particular epistemology shared among those historians. Their "westernisation" critiques on the history of non-Western countries are based on "an epistemology that ignores the limitations and contradictions inherent in such change"; in other words, they "do not address the problematic of adaptation itself" (Tanaka 1993, i). In practice, what is regarded as a "westernisation process" of non-Western cultures does not represent either a willing indulgence to the glamour of the modern West, a hearty welcome of a complete set of Western cultural elements, nor a ready separation from the conventional practices prevalent in the non-West before the introduction of Western civilisation.

The conceptual framework of "westernisation" often neglects these social and cultural complexities in which the art museums have developed in Japan. However, this negligence, a critic points out, brought about another kind of "emptiness" into Japanese art museums.

> This feeling of vacancy [in Japanese art museums] derives from their struggle to become [real, i.e. Western-style] "art museums". The intention to make collections as [real] art museums would do lead directly to the making of empty spaces. This uncritical causality has already been established. In other words, the fact that, before questioning what art museums are, its answer has already been prepared as self-evident is the problem. [Tachiki 1996, 23–24]

This "feeling of vacancy" is due to the superficial imitation of the "self-evident" models of the West, which are essentially associated with particular circumstances of the Western culture and society, regardless of the actual conditions surrounding the Japanese museums. The main concern in my subsequent examination of the

"empty museums" is precisely the cultural and social circumstances of Japan to which the modern-Western concept and institution of "art museums" were adapted.

2.4. Transculturation Critique and the Empty Museums

In the introductory section of this chapter, I discussed the concept of "transculturation" as an approach, alternative to the "westernisation" discourse, to the empty museum phenomenon in post-war Japan. To be more precise, the conceptual framework of transculturation shares my concern with the cultural and social circumstances in which Japanese museums have developed, which would be neglected by the empty museum discourse associated with the "westernisation" concept. In the current empty-museum critique, as I have already argued in Section 2, the presence of the elements characterising Japanese museums are readily ignored while the absence of the components commonly contained in the Western institutions is emphasised. It is only with regret at their role in preventing the museums from their attaining "normal" development toward Western ideals that positively non-Western elements of Japanese culture may be discussed in this discourse.

A variety of the Japanese cultural aspects which remain "un-westernised" are raised by Japanese scholars. Two museologists based in academic institutions, Kato Yuji (加藤有次) and Nakamura Takao (中村たかを),[32] maintain that our traditional education which totally depended on reading and writing tended to neglect the importance of "real" objects and experiences (Kato 1982, 267; Nakamura 1996b, 35). They both believe that culture based on letters rather than materials

---

[32] Kato is Professor of Museology at the Kokugakuin University, Tokyo, and Nakamura (1931–) is Professor Emeritus at the National Museum of Ethnography,

is one of the reasons why museums do not really become part of Japanese society and why its academic standard remains lower than that of the West. Kurata (1988, 122) points out that the Japanese are not very good at collecting objects persistently:

> Both learning and culture are essentially based on the practise of collection. To collect is to accumulate material from the past. However, our country seems less enthusiastic about such work than the Occidental countries. For example, I am always surprised to find that in Europe not only old streets and buildings but also public records and other various materials are preserved in public and private institutions.

He finds several reasons for this Japanese inability in the trends and traditions of the country. He refers briefly to the influence of Buddhism which teaches us not to persist in transient materials of this world (ibid., 122), the lack of "logistical" skills which Japanese military history proves (ibid., 95), and the tendency to prefer being "narrow and deep" rather than "broad and shallow" in knowledge and study (ibid., 122). Hasegawa and Isomura both concern the "private" and "closed" nature of Japanese culture which conflicts with the public and open conditions of European culture. Isomura Eiichi (磯村英一),[33] a pioneer of urban sociology in Japan, says, "Japanese have adopted art and culture indoors – into their private life style. As they did not have a square in the middle of a town, they do not place art and culture into the public space to appreciate them" (Isomura and Isozaki 1982, 6). It was not until after the War that people became interested in the public side of art and culture and learned to adopt such ideas as "open culture" which originated in the West (ibid., 7). Hasegawa (1994) refers to the tradition of antique collection deriving from the tea ceremony and suggests that Japan should part with such a

---

Osaka. He previously taught ethnography and museology at various universities.

[33] Various posts Isomura took in his lifetime include Director of the Public Welfare Bureau of Tokyo, Professor (and later Professor Emeritus) of the Tokyo

closed cultural tradition:

> We should no longer be confined to the closed space of "paulownia [*kiri*] box culture" which represents the authority of "box signature".[34] We should throw information to the public, which is based on the spirit of "public collection" ("*collection publique*") in the countries of the Western Europe which are advanced in art museums. [317]

These criticisms, however, concentrate on one particular form of artistic organisation inside the empty museums – the "art group" ("*bijutsu dantai*" 「美術団体」). This grouping of artists characteristically developed in modern Japan and is closely related to the development of the "emptiness". I shall discuss its characteristics further in Chapters 4 and 5, and for now only refer to three characteristics of these groups in order to clarify their distinctiveness in relation to comparable groups of artists in the West. Firstly, they are incredibly long-lived compared to Western artists' groups. The Japan Academy of Art (Nihon Bijutsu In [日本美術院])[35] established in 1898 still dominates the art world in Japan today as one of the most influential art groups; the Nitten (日展), the Nika Kai (二科会), the Shunyo Kai (春陽会), and the Dokuritsu Bijutsu Kyokai (独立美術協会) all boast a history of more than seventy years. The second characteristic concerns their ambiguous links with artistic principles. Many groups were established to advocate some distinctive kind of artistic beliefs and practices, but those initial orientations inevitably became increasingly obscure as these groups survived for a number of years. In the course of their development, they neither continued to

---

Metropolitan University, and President of the Toyo University.

[34] According to the tradition of ceremonial tea, each art object is kept in the box made of paulownia wood whose surface has an authorisation (usually a signature) of its artist or a connoisseur. Even at home, those artefacts are rarely displayed; they are usually wrapped in the cloths and put in the signed boxes to be stored deep inside the closet. Moreover, the box signature is as important as the object itself; the value of the object could be halved without its "genuine" box.

[35] Note that this "Academy" is not a Japanese equivalent of artists' Academies in

insist on their founding principles nor explicitly changed their principles and styles according to the current of the times. Thirdly, the members of these groups were not exclusively "professional artists" but included professionals and amateurs of different levels. Each group consisted of a particular form of teacher-disciple relation associated with Japanese artistic tradition, and the engagement in artistic work varied from the commercially sustainable masters to the middle-class housewives without much ambition in the artistic ahievements. These groups of artists have always benefited from the characteristic emptiness of the public museums since the establishment of their first example, the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum. The art groups which held their exhibitions at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum numbered 82 in 1942. Although their activities were severely restricted for a few years during World War II, 33 groups managed to return to the museum in 1946 and their number reached 100 by the early 1960s. All the other empty museums that were established after the War have also functioned as rental spaces for the temporary exhibitions of these artists' organisations to a certain extent. Along with the *kikakuten* exhibitions organised by curating companies and mass media, the art group exhibitions remain essential and regular features of the "empty" galleries. Many museologists consider this situation as an "abuse" of the public museums. According to them, the museum galleries should be occupied not by the art group exhibitions but by the permanent exhibitions.

Thus, in the current criticisms of "empty museums", the elements culturally and historically specific to Japanese society are discussed only as factors which prevent those unique institutions from developing faithfully according to Western models. In the transculturation critique, however, these elements associated with

---

Europe associated with "official" exhibitions. See Chapters 4 and 5.

Japanese public art museums are separated from the norm of "westernisation". The conceptual framework of transculturation is based not on the hierarchical relation between the dominant, advanced West and subordinate, and backward Japan but on the mutual, interactive, and asymmetrical relations between the two different cultures. "Westernisation" is a "policy" commonly taken up by a succession of modern Japanese governments from the late nineteenth century onward. In Chapter 1, I identified two periods of Japanese history in which this policy was most explicitly and exhaustively adopted: the beginning of the Meiji Era (1868) and the first few decades after the end of World War II (1945). The "westernisation" policy certainly promoted the adoption of Western cultural products and stimulated the public interests in them. However, this governmental orientation would not essentially secure a dominant position of Western culture over that of Japanese. In the process of the adoption of Western cultural elements by Japanese society, these elements inevitably confront, interact and negotiate with the "alien" elements of Japanese culture. I do not deny the transformation of Japan through the contact with the West, but it is only one side of the whole story. Japanese culture has never been simply waiting to be completely "westernised"; the Western elements were adopted and developed only selectively according to the cultural and historical conditions of contemporary Japanese society. Moreover, the Western cultures have never been immune to the socio-cultural environment of the foreign land; it is inevitable that they have been "japanised" as well as the Japanese culture has been "westernised". The "westernisation" discourse neglects both the autonomy of Japan in relation to the Western cultural influence and the potential transformation of the West in the course of its encounter to the "other".

This concept of transculturation has been applied to a variety of post-colonial

studies of non-Western arts and cultures (Clifford 1997; Thomas 1991). Of course, the "post-colonial" discourses cannot be directly transferred to discuss the Japanese case. For, in the two most significant periods of Japan's "westernisation" (early in the Meiji era and the post-World-War II period), Japan did not experience Western colonisation of its own land to the extent that many other Asian and African countries did. In the Meiji period, it was always Japanese officials themselves who undertook "westernisation" and "modernisation" on their own initiative. Some of these government officials were educated in Europe or the U.S., and a substantial number of Occidentals were hired by government at the very beginning of the extensive social reform[36]; but it was the Japanese themselves who abolished the long-standing shogunate, replaced it with a constitutional monarchy modelled on the German system, and overhauled the whole nation – ranging from the military force, education system, and economic infrastructures to fashion and food – according to Western norms. In the case of the post-War period, Japan lost its political sovereignty for the first time in its history to the General Headquarters of Allied Powers (GHQ) between 1945 and 1951. Comprehensive programmes for "democratisation", "modernisation", and "westernisation" of Japanese society were conducted by the American-led GHQ; but even then it was not a "colonisation" of the same kind as that was conducted in Africa, America, Asia, and Oceania throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries by European and Japanese imperialist regimes.[37] Nevertheless, in spite of this lack of colonial encounters and experiences, the concept of transculturation will prove informative in

---

[36] See essays included in Burks 1985 (especially Ishizuki 1985) and Kumamoto 1978.

[37] See Komori 2001 for the detailed discussion of the Japanese imperialism and the colonial experience of post-war Japan.

understanding modern Japanese history. For the transculturation perspective is grounded on the "ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict" (Pratt 1992, 6) but *not essentially* on the asymmetrical conditions determined by the degree of colonial aggressions and of the loss of sovereignty. In the case of modern Japan, the asymmetry between the Japanese and the Western cultures has been produced not through colonial governance by the West but mostly by the self-imposed tasks of "westernisation" and "modernisation". Moreover, what is emphasised by the transculturation critique is the "mutuality" and "interaction" between the different cultures no matter how unequal and problematic their relations are. The subordinate culture is not simply overwhelmed by the dominant other, but it can choose, adopt, and adapt what it needs for itself from what the dominant culture would offer; the dominant culture, which is usually regarded as independent of and therefore unaffected by the subordinate other, may also be transformed in relation to the minor. If the mutual and interactive relations are effected even under the colonial circumstances where the sovereignty of non-Western cultures is most clearly and severely restricted, it may be reasonable to assume that the relations of this kind should be no less significant in the examination of the Japanese case where "westernisation" was explicitly chosen by the non-West of its own will.

The theoretical framework of transculturation – though this term itself is not used – has already been applied to a variety of studies in the field of modern Japanese history. Stefan Tanaka's work on the development of historical perspectives in Meiji Japan, to which I have already referred earlier in this chapter, is undoubtedly one of the most important, recent attempts of this new critique. "History" was a new knowledge of the West introduced to Japan in the Meiji period.

In his study, Tanaka (1993) argues that the introduction of this Western knowledge did not represent a case of "westernisation" of Japanese culture; it was a process "to understand and incorporate that knowledge into their [Japanese] received knowledge and institutions" (16). This transcultural perspective is also evident in a number of recent studies by contemporary Japanese scholars who are interested in the development of art and its exhibition spaces in modern Japan. Their studies will be discussed further in the following chapters as the need arises; for now, I only point out two major fields of their concern. One is the attempt chiefly among art historians to examine the development of what is now called "art" ("*bijutsu*") and its "history".[38] If it had not been for the introduction of Western conceptions of "art" and "history", Japan would not have known such a means of classification. In fact, even the word, "*bijutsu*", did not exist until it was literally "invented" because of the demand supplied by the international exposition in Vienna (1873) in which the modern state government of Meiji first participated; and the first history of Japanese art was published in French for the exposition in Paris in 1900. "*Bijutsu*" then developed as a classificatory division of artefacts, a concept of beauty, a domain of cultural production and consumption, and a series of artistic movements, through the conflicts and negotiations between their Western counterparts and the Japanese cultural circumstances. The second field of current studies focuses on the exhibition spaces which developed in modern European societies and which were introduced to Japan as necessities for its modernisation. Those spaces include international and domestic expositions, museums and art museums, and department stores.[39] All those studies are concerned not with how

---

[38] For example, Kinoshita 1993; Kitazawa 1989; 2000; Sato 1996a.
[39] For example, Hatsuda 1999; Kaneko 2001; Yoshimi 1992.

the "westernisation" process was fulfilled properly or remain unfulfilled but with the process in which "art" and its exhibition spaces were adopted and developed contingently in the cultural and historical contexts specific to contemporary Japanese society. My subsequent discussion on the development of the public art museums and their characteristic emptiness in modern Japan is informed by the empirical findings and theoretical perspectives of those current studies mainly pertaining to the pre-war period.

2. 5. Conclusion

My analysis of the development of public art museums in Japan will involve close examination of the various social, cultural, and historical aspects specific to Japan and their interactions with the "Western" concepts or institutions associated with "art museums", "exhibitions", "expositions", and "art". Then, I will reconsider the characteristic "emptiness" of the Japanese art museums as a consequence, or a part of the process of transculturation. The concern with a wide range of social and cultural contexts is, however, not monopolised by the transculturation critique. As I have mentioned in the introductory section of this chapter (2.1), this "contextual approach" to the history and the current conditions of public art museums is one of the distinctive aspects of the "new museology" as a whole. This new current of museum studies brings together social and cultural perspectives to provide a more contextually specific account of the museum development.

In this chapter, I have argued for the significance of such contextual analysis in the specific case of the empty museum discourse. I have discussed how the current criticisms on the characteristic "emptiness" of the public art museums in Japan are closely related to the traditional form of museum studies. The "old

museology" is based on the worship of the classic goals of Western museums, which orientates the empty museum discourse toward the tendency of "westernisation". In this critique, the development of art museums in Japan is regarded as a part of the "westernisation" process to which Japan has been committed since the end of the nineteenth century; and the phenomenon of the "empty museums" proves its "miscarriage" because of their characteristics unprecedented in the West. This "westernisation" discourse associated with the empty museum critique neglects the cultural and historical contexts of Japan to which the Western cultures were introduced; Japan is considered as a "cultural vacuum" or at best the cultural elements specific to its society are criticised as preventing museums from following Western models faithfully.

However, it is not only the Japanese social and cultural contexts which developed the peculiar kind of museum that are neglected in the empty-museum discourse but also the implications of the cultures and societies of the modern West which materialised a prototype of such an institution in the first place. As we have seen in this chapter, in the ongoing critical discourses on the empty museums informed by the traditional form of Japanese museology, Western models invariably embody the absolute norms and ideals which the Japanese institutions should follow. The hierarchical relations between "backward Japan" and the "advanced West" would idealise the latter as the perpetual model and the unquestionable goal while condemning the former for its differences from the latter. These criticisms are not concerned with the complex and close relationships between the development of the public art institutions and modern European societies. Readily accepting the inviolable sanctity of evolutionary histories of the museum and the present situation of the European institutions, Japanese museologists have not

critically examined their practices as culturally, socially, and historically constructed in the modern West.

In the next chapter, my focus shifts to the development of Western art museums as discussed in the wider range of theoretical perspectives of the new museology. In this chapter, I have already shown my interest in contextual accounts for the significance of the "emptiness" characteristically developed in the Japanese institutions. Now I examine how this new current of museum studies may encompass the history and the present situation of the Western museums which are described only as "ideal" in the traditional museological discourse of Japanese scholars. The new museological studies reveal a more complex and comprehensive process of the formation and transformation of the public art museums in relation to the particular conditions of contemporary European cultures and societies.

Chapter 3

New Museological Perspectives

on the Development of Art Exhibitions and Museums in the West

3.1. Introduction

This chapter has two main objectives. One is to show how the development of Western museums is interpreted through current studies informed by the new museology; the other is to introduce the various theoretical perspectives and empirical findings pertaining to the development of the Western museum that I will draw on in my subsequent discussion of Japanese institutions. For these purposes, I identify four issues arising from the current debates in this new discipline.

First, I focus on the processes through which the art museum/exhibition was made "public" in eighteenth-century Europe and its interpretation as a part of what Jürgen Habermas calls the "public sphere". The public nature developed by modern European art spaces is one of the most important aspects of both the old and new museological debates. The traditionalist approach regards this nature as a "norm" of every institution; it is an ultimate consequence of the evolutionary development of the museum and a glorious accomplishment of a series of liberal reformers. In contrast, the new museological approach offers a contextually specific account of the art museum's "publicness" by considering complex and comprehensive relations between the public nature acquired by modern European art exhibitions and museums and the cultural and social context specific to contemporary Europe. I take the Salon in eighteenth-century Paris as my example here. The Salon, the annual competitive exhibition of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, developed its particular characteristics as a part of the

public sphere in relation to the newly-rising bourgeoisie in eighteenth-century Paris. This "bourgeois public sphere", as Habermas puts it, distinguished in its structure from the public sphere associated with the absolute monarchy in the previous century, involved a transformation of a wide range of public institutions – from church and state government to coffee houses, art exhibitions, and museums. Habermas argues that it was not a case of the increasing public nature acquired by these institutions developed in the eighteenth century; it was a structural transformation of their public nature itself. It is by considering the transformation of the publicness – from the one associated with the absolute monarchy in the seventeenth century to the one linked with bourgeois society in the late eighteenth century that the public nature acquired by art exhibitions in Europe may be examined more precisely. This perspective proves resourceful in further investigating into the public nature developed in a variety of public institutions for art objects in the following centuries.

The second issue I shall explore concerns the class dynamics of bourgeois culture in modern Europe, especially in their bearing on the continued exclusivity of the art museum. This exclusivity of the modern art spaces associated with the bourgeoisie is pointed out by Habermas in his own discussion of the bourgeois public sphere. I develop my discussion of this exclusive nature with reference to the studies of the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu. The fact that museum visiting was and remains an activity strongly connected to the culturally and economically privileged classes has been proved by a series of empirical studies by Bourdieu and his followers after the late 1960s (Bourdieu and Darbel 1991; DiMaggio and Ostrower 1992; Merriman 1988, 1989, 1991; Miyajima, et al. 1991; Miyajima 1994). My concern focuses on the concept of "cultural capital" – i.e. the

form of "capital" associated with and essential for the production and consumption of cultural products. This capital consists of a wide range of possessions such as knowledge, techniques, tastes, sensibility, and disposition, and it is closely related to the social classes determined by profession, formal education, the level of income, home environment, etc. The "cultural capital" required for museum visiting is by no means equally distributed; it is possessed and transmitted by generations of the privileged classes. This perspective allows greater insight into the complex nature of the art museum – as a place where a particular form of consumption (visiting a museum, going to an exhibition) of cultural products (works of art) takes place.

The third section examines the development of the public art museum in Europe as part of the development of "liberal" government in bourgeois society. My discussion here is informed by a series of recent studies applying the Foucauldian concept of "liberal government" to the new form of publicness acquired by the museum in the nineteenth century. In nineteenth-century Europe, cultural resources (most typically paintings and sculptures) whose availability had long been restricted to the privileged classes were progressively made accessible to lower-class audiences in the context of a newly emerging form of government. Liberal government strategically governs through "culture", regarding culture as a means of promoting middle-class, "civilising" values among the working classes. Culture is no longer just something one possesses as capital but a means of inculcation indirectly brought about through the institutions of civil society including art museums. Art objects are increasingly recognised as a useful means for taming the rough and disturbing behaviours of the lower classes, and there was a growing interest in museum visiting as a rational recreation, which would bring about voluntary, inner, moral transformations, as an alternative to drinking,

fighting, and mobbing.

The final issue focuses specifically on the nature of the institution that is the subject of discussion in this thesis: an exhibitionary space designed specifically for "works of art". "Art" as a categorical term consisting of painting and sculpture was not common until the late nineteenth century. This concept of art developed in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe along with the public exhibition spaces for art objects which were eventually accommodated in the purpose-built art museums. I especially concentrate on the emergence and development of historically-classified collections and displays. My analysis here is based on Foucault's concept of *episteme*, which means:

> the total set of relations that unite, at a given period, the discursive practices that give rise to epistemological figures, sciences, and possibly formalized systems; the way in which, in each of these discursive formations, the transitions to epistemologization, scientificity, and formalization are situated and operate; the distribution of these thresholds, which may coincide, be subordinated to one another, or be separated by shifts in time; the lateral relations that may exist between epistemological figures or sciences in so far as they belong to neighbouring, but distinct, discursive practices. [Foucault 1972, 191]

I accordingly interpret the development of art-historical perspectives in relation to Foucault's modern *episteme* which is characterised by a particular sense of history.

In the concluding section, I identify the perspectives on the development of Western museums associated with the new museological researches that I draw on in relation to my discussion of the development of Japanese museums. These issues are all important in the case of Western museums; but their relevance to and significance in the Japanese case vary because of the unique cultural and historical circumstances of Japanese societies at different periods of history.

3.2. The Art Museum and the Public Sphere

In this section, I examine the public nature of the art museum in reference to the concept of the "public sphere" in Habermas's terms. Although this concept focuses on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the liberalisation of social relations associated with the development of civil society replaced the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century absolutism of monarchy and church in Europe, it gives a useful and suggestive explanation of the distinctive publicness which we now associate with the exhibition space for art objects. The new form of public sphere developed in relation to the newly-risen bourgeoisie is defined by Habermas as "a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed" and whose access is "guaranteed to all citizens" (Habermas 1974, 49). My discussion takes this definition of the "bourgeois public sphere" as its point of departure. I shall, however, aim to demonstrate the essentially contradictory nature of this publicness and to trace its relations to the particular circumstances of modern European society. I am concerned especially with the development of the Salon exhibition in Paris in the latter half of the eighteenth century. This annual exhibition, organised by the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture and involving public competition and prizes, is the earliest example of an exhibition that acquired the characteristic publicness Habermas describes.

The Salon originated in the establishment of an officially recognised public body of artists which consciously distinguished itself from the medieval guilds.[1] In

---

[1] See Crow 1985, 107. When the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture was founded, its members were generally still identified with "artisans" under the stubborn influence of late-medieval practice. They were systematically transformed into "artists" by the new national institution. The Académie restricted its members' commercial activities and outlawed all the rituals and festivities that had been a significant dimension of the guild life.

Paris, the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture was founded in 1648 under the initiative of Charles Le Brun (1619–90) in the service of the Court of Louis XIV (1643–1715). In 1664, Jean-Batiste Colbert (1619–83) accorded it the same privileges as the Académie Française, and three years later the first Salon exhibition was held. This effort of the Academy for public art exhibition, however, did not achieve an immediate success in establishing this new custom, whose practice was limited to irregular events displaying works of Academicians either in its own meeting rooms or in the open arcades of the Palais Royal. In 1699, the Salon was resurrected in the Louvre after two decades of suspension, but it was not until Philbert Orry, the finance minister, resumed it in 1737 that the Salon finally became a regular event in the art world of Paris. This official exhibition soon became a major public entertainment of the capital city, and the duration of the exhibition was prolonged from time to time because of public enthusiasm.[2]

Before discussing the particular form of the public sphere represented by the Salon, I briefly summarise the characteristics of the public sphere in seventeenth-century Europe – i.e. during the age of absolutism – which preceded the development of its bourgeois counterpart. Habermas states that the forms of representative publicness associated with the public sphere under the absolute monarchy essentially embodied the power of the Court, church, and nobility (Habermas 1989, 5–12). In such a society, public events, ceremonies, and festivals which constituted part of the public sphere displayed the grandeur of their sponsors, and art and literature performed in those public occasions invariably served to represent the power of their patrons (ibid., 32). In the age of absolutism, the public as clientele of visual and performing arts and literature was restricted to the

---

[2] For the detailed history and description of the Salon, see Crow 1985.

court and the privileged few surrounding it at least until the eighteenth century (ibid., 31–32). The populace was not completely excluded from such public cultural events as theatrical performances and art exhibitions; nonetheless they remained mere witnesses of the public representation of royal and upper-class power, where commoners applauded as aristocrats paraded themselves at the Globe Theatre[3] or the Comédie-Française[4] (ibid., 38) or where the lower-class audience at the early Salon were simply overwhelmed by the spectacular exhibition of paintings symbolising power of the monarchy.

In the eighteenth century, according to Habermas, this "publicness" was transformed in relation to the ongoing changes of social and cultural circumstances that took place in Europe. The transformation of the Salon in eighteenth-century Paris indicated that the exhibition was restructured to embody the public sphere led by the newly-risen bourgeoisie. How can the Salon be identified, in Habermas's definition I gave above, as a sphere where some kind of "public opinion" could be formed? "Public opinion" (or "*opinion publique*") as "the critical reflections of a public competent to form its own judgments" is a product of the late eighteenth century (ibid., 90). Until then, "opinion" in both English and French had been predestined by its Latin origin, *opinio*, "the uncertain, not fully demonstrated judgment" (ibid., 89), which conflicted with the rationality that its modern usage manifested. In order to overturn this scepticism attached to the word, the bourgeois public had to be a debating and reasoning public to arrive at a collective

---

[3] The Globe Theatre was located in Southwark in London (1598–1644) and famous as a headquarter of the band of players for whom William Shakespeare (1564–1616) wrote his plays.

[4] The theatre company based in Paris, partly originated by Molière's (Jean Baptiste Poquelin, 1622–73) seventeenth-century players, was founded in 1680 by Louis XIV. Since then, it has enjoyed state patronage as a national centre of art and culture.

rational opinion. The Salon, originating in the late seventeenth century, had not always functioned as a bourgeois public sphere in this sense; in its early days, this official exhibition of the Academy was a part of the public sphere where a social event of the royalty and the upper classes manifested their tastes, privileges, and power and consolidated their legitimacy rather than to the public sphere where public opinion was formed and exchanged among the bourgeoisie. According to Crow (1985, 103), the first evidence of the substantial existence of "public opinion" formed in the Salon may be traced back to 1747. Although there were some good reasons to assume that the academicians had encountered severe criticisms in print before, those publications were not taken seriously enough to be carefully preserved with their authors' names or to upset the Salon officials (ibid., 118–19). The 1747 Salon was evidently the turning point, because it was the year when a campaign against the official tastes of the Salon (i.e. the Academy, and the state) was launched by a notable contemporary art critic, Etienne La Font de Saint-Yenne, and it was after this very year that unofficial, dissenting critical publications dramatically increased in quantity and significance.

I note three aspects regarding the public opinion and its exchange in the public sphere materialised by the Salon. First, the bourgeois public sphere is by no means an integral part of state authority nor its "official" sphere. On the contrary, "public opinion" associated with the bourgeois sphere was formed *in its conflict with* the public power of the state and the monarchy[5] and through various

---

Its present building was established in 1799.

[5] In this sense, the modern publicness of the bourgeoisie is distinguished also from that of the ancient European society. The model of ancient Greece relied heavily on the absolute position of the state authority, which guaranteed the social status of a citizen and, for whose protection, the citizens fought against each other and the enemies outside (Habermas 1989, 51–52).

"unofficial" institutions such as coffee-houses in Britain and *salons* in France.[6] So far as the Salon exhibition is concerned, this process was well represented by a series of criticisms of history painting – the sublime and most respectable genre of oil painting at that time – by the increasingly vocal portion of the audience. This "noble genre", closely related to the ruling classes and their tastes[7], was the *raison d'être* of the Academy and the most highly estimated in its official hierarchy of tastes, for which neither "an enlightened public thoughtfully attending the Academy's more ambitious productions" nor "a mass audience easily satisfied with the rest" expressed any sign of approval (ibid., 103). The Academy made every effort to revive this dying tradition against the growing neglect and antagonism of the anti-official public. The most important programme of the Academy to enhance the tradition of history painting had been the Prix de Rome competition since it was launched by Colbert in 1664.[8] This annual contest of the painting and sculpture of historical subjects had established the system to recruit new talents for

---

[6] The *salon* here is distinguished from the Salon exhibition I have been discussing. It indicates a social and often cultural gathering of celebrity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. According to Habermas, it was the centre of the literary, and eventually political, criticism, which soon formed the egalitarian relationship between the aristocratic society (mainly the urban aristocrats who no longer functioned either economically or politically) and the intellectual bourgeois (including writers, artists, and scientists), bonded by their common cultural background (Habermas 1989, 32–33).

[7] Barrell (1989) offers a profound insight into the relationship between this pictorial genre and its supporting classes through the discourse of civic humanism in eighteenth-century Britain which was based on an overt distinction between "those who govern" and "those who are governed". Only the former were capable of pursuing active "public virtues", which was essential to the survival and prosperity of the free State. They, called "free men", "gentlemen", or "enfranchised citizens", had to be "men of leisure", free from the necessity to be engaged in commercial activities which were regarded as unsuitable for gentlemen because of their private nature and incompatible with the noble public duties expected of them. The paintings of heroic deeds from the past or Greek mythology were therefore considered as ideal for the education of those ruling class men.

[8] The name of the competition was due to its prize which allowed its winners to

the further development of the most celebrated pictorial genre. However, by the 1740s, the prestigious position taken by the competition had been seriously destabilised. Because of the paucity of talent, no prizes were awarded to painters in 1740, 1742, 1744, 1745, and 1747. Alerted by the decline of the official taste of the Academy and the growth of the alternative tastes nourished by the critical audience of the Salon exhibition, the Academy launched a series of rescue programmes for its value system. For instance, it established its own school, the Ecole des Élèves Protégés (School of Protected Pupils), to train Prix de Rome winners (1749), sponsored the history painting competition of 1747 which especially aimed to stimulate the genre, and revived the seventeenth-century "*conférences*" – the academic lectures given by its senior members on various artistic theories which usually coincided with the regular meeting of the Academy and which usually were followed by open discussion with their audience including artists and laymen.[9] It was in the middle of all those desperate efforts of the Academy that La Font's notorious essay against the official tastes – *Refléxions sur quelques causes de l'état présent de la peinture* – was published (1747). As McClellan (1994) argues, its appearance was the last crucial blow to the fading tradition which had barely been preserved by the declining conservatives in the authorities. La Font materialised the "issues and proposals" of the anti-official public "that were already in the air" (ibid., 20). This campaign succeeded in suspending any major attempt in state support for history painting for nearly two decades; and, when it resumed in 1765, it only confronted public indifference and, more embarrassingly, the King's refusal to acquire its winners' pictures.

---

study at the French Academy in Rome for three years or longer.

[9] See Crow 1985, 28; McClellan 1994, 16–17.

Second, amateur art criticisms were progressively institutionalised in the Salon. Habermas observes the emergence of "public opinion" in typical eighteenth-century institutions such as coffee-houses and *salons*, and this process began with the formation of amateur criticism, which developed into hand-written critical newsletters and later became professionalised as printed periodicals. "As instruments of institutionalized art criticism," he writes, "the journals devoted to art and cultural criticism were typical creations of the eighteenth century" (Habermas 1989, 41). Regarding the Salon exhibition, this institutionalisation is most evident in the development of the unofficial criticism stimulated by La Font's *Refléxions*. A number of unofficial leaflets (*livrets*) started to be circulated to criticise and defend various views on art in the mid-eighteenth century, and they formed a social sphere where the printed, professionalised criticisms on contemporary art were exchanged. In this process of the institutionalisation of art criticism, anonymous "enlightened amateurs" were transformed into the professional critics who signed their names in their opinions. They were called "*Kunstrichter*" (art critic) in the jargon of the time (ibid., 40–41).

The last issue is the relationship between the formation of the bourgeois public sphere and the commodification of culture. The latter preconditioned the former in the sense that it allowed the rational, discussing public to problematise areas that had never been questioned before:

> The domain of "common concern" which was the object of public critical attention remained a preserve in which church and state authorities had the monopoly of interpretation not just from the pulpit but in philosophy, literature, and art, even at a time when, for specific social categories, the development of capitalism already demanded a behaviour whose rational orientation required ever more information. To the degree, however, to which philosophical and literary works and works of art in general were produced for the market and distributed through it, these culture products became similar to that type of information: as commodities they became in principle generally accessible. They no longer remained components of the Church's and court's publicity of representation; that is precisely what was meant by the loss of their aura of extraordinariness and by the profaning of their once sacramental character. The private people for whom the cultural product became available as a commodity profaned it inasmuch as they had to determine its meaning on their own (by way of rational communication with one another), verbalize it, and thus state explicitly what precisely in its implicitness for so long could assert its authority. [ibid., 36–37]

Habermas mentions painting especially as the cultural domain where such a transformation occurred in the most intensive degree (ibid., 40). Painting basically had belonged to a small circle of connoisseurs and collectors among the socially and economically privileged classes until the early eighteenth century, and painters essentially had worked for this specialised audience. "Operating at the highest levels of aesthetic ambition", artists had not addressed "their wider audience directly; they had first to satisfy, or at least resolve, the more immediate demands of elite individuals and groups" (Crow 1985, 2). However, by the mid-century, they realised that their traditional patron classes could no longer promise them prosperity or reputation, and the growth of the bourgeoisie and of their "public opinion" compelled them to work for the bourgeois market.

So far, I have focused on the first part of the brief definition of Habermas's bourgeois public sphere as "a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed" and neglected the latter part of the brief definition of Habermas's bourgeois public sphere: "Access is guaranteed to all

citizens" (see the beginning of this section). The public accessibility to the spaces to debate and exchange issues on equal and shared terms is one of the most important elements in the public sphere, in its relation to "the principle of supervision", through which the bourgeois demands that proceedings be made public (*Publizität*) (Habermas 1974, 52; 1989, 27–28). In the process of the resistance to state power, to the institutionalisation/professionalisation of public opinion, and to the commodification of culture, the art exhibition indeed became open to all those who were willing and able to join the critical debates over the artistic and cultural issues and objects which had remained "unquestioned" for a long time (see above). Nevertheless, the *Publizität* reveals its limitation rather than its full achievement in the public sphere for the display of paintings and sculptures. In spite of their apparent manifestation of openness (*demonstrative Publizität*), the organisations of the bourgeois public sphere were essentially exclusive in terms of gender, class, and race. As Habermas realises, the larger public vaguely formed in the bourgeois public sphere was still minute in comparison with the masses in the urban and rural areas, most of whom were excluded from any act of cultural consumption because of the lack of cultural and financial conditions essential for participation (1989, 37–38). As McGuigan (1992, 173–74) states,

> [B]ourgeois men secured liberties for themselves during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by constructing a 'public sphere' of information and debate. To extend such liberties to others in terms of class, gender and race has been an enduring struggle and never with a fully egalitarian result anywhere for complex historical and structural reasons.

This contradictory character of the public sphere is evident in the studies of bourgeois institutions (Harris and Nochlin 1976; Pollock 1988; Stallybrass and White 1986) and the critical literature on Habermas (McGuigan 1992; 1996). Thus

the bourgeois public sphere essentially consists of the upper- and middle-class men who were culturally, financially, and legally equipped with the ability to participate. Only those privileged few can discuss, make their own judgements, and form public opinion.

In the next section, I expand this contradictory character of the art exhibition/museum associated with the bourgeois public sphere. The forms of exclusion of the unprivileged were varied in the institutions of the bourgeois public sphere in the eighteenth century. Working-class men were actively excluded through the introduction of entrance fees and dress codes and the regulations prohibiting rough manners (Stallybrass and White 1986, 87). The exclusion of women as a whole was for different reasons – their political and legal subordination to men (Pollock 1988). However, in the course of the development of democracy and capitalism in European societies, the legal and financial restrictions to the public sphere have been removed to a considerable extent today; and the museum has never been as open as it declares itself to be. My main concern, therefore, is not the political/technical exclusivity of the art spaces but the exclusivity associated with what Pierre Bourdieu calls "cultural capital". Bourdieu has proved in his joint empirical research on European museums and their visitors that, despite its manifestation of publicness, the art museum is reserved for generations of the professional and middle classes who have acquired cultural competence, or the "cultural capital", to participate in the world of art.

3.3. The Exclusivity of the Art Museum

The empirical study by Bourdieu and others in the late 1960s (Bourdieu and Darbel 1991) proves that the art museum is an exclusive space despite its

manifestation of openness. This survey conducted in five European countries (Spain, France, Greece, Holland, and Poland) clearly indicates that the exclusivity of European art museums and exhibitions reveals a close link between the practice of museum visiting and the cultural levels of the visitors and proves that they belong almost exclusively to "the cultivated classes" (ibid., 14). Of course, in theory, the art museum as a "public" institution is "open to all"; but Bourdieu calls this a "false generosity". For "free entrance is also optional entry, reserved for those who, equipped with the ability to appropriate the works of art, have the privilege of making use of this freedom" (ibid., 113; Bourdieu 1968, 611). According to Bourdieu, moreover, not only museum visiting but all cultural practices (in literature and music as well as in painting and sculpture) are strongly related to education and upbringing (Bourdieu 1979).[10] Subsequent studies which produced similar findings include the study of museum visiting in Britain by Nick Merriman (1988, 1989, 1991), the racial and ethnic analysis of the participation in art-related activities in the United States by Paul DiMaggio and Francie Ostrower (DiMaggio, et al. 1992), and the Japanese case examined by Miyajima Takashi (宮島喬) and his research group (Miyajima, et al. 1991; Miyajima 1994). My main concerns in this section are the "ability" and the "privilege" of visiting a museum to appreciate the works of art, which subtly but efficiently exclude certain kinds of people from the art space. In what sense could it be argued that a certain kind of "ability" or "competence" should be required to visit an art museum? And how could this ability become a "privilege" of certain classes in the society? I discuss these

---

[10] Note that Bourdieu and Darbel 1991 originally published in French in 1969 preceded Bourdieu 1979 whose French original was published in the same year. The latter is a result of the more comprehensive study of the relationship between various cultural practices (or preferences) and social class measured by educational

questions in reference to the concept of "cultural capital" which is concerned with the links between cultural knowledge, taste, disposition and social classes.

The "ability" to visit a museum and to appreciate art objects is dependent on the level and the kind of the cultural capital possessed by individuals. One would not go there only because a museum is open at one's doorstep; museum visiting, like any other cultural activities, involves one's choice. It may not cost much and it may be relatively easy to access; but there are in fact a number of ideological "obstacles" which make museums so exclusive. One needs to be capable of clearing or handling those obstacles before finding oneself in a museum gallery. One of the most important obstacles at the threshold of the art museum is the fact that museum visiting inevitably involves the acts of "deciphering" the value of art objects within the limits of the artistic competence each visitor possesses. Bourdieu maintains that the artless and innocent "fresh eye" is a myth, because no artistic perception is free from a certain "unconscious code" (Bourdieu 1968, 590). The work of art "only exists as such to the extent that it is perceived, or in other words deciphered" (ibid., 601; 1991, 107) according to a "set of instruments for the appropriation of the work of art, available at a given time" (Bourdieu 1968, 594) which has been mastered by the beholder. Such instruments to achieve a certain degree of artistic competence are "the interpretation schemes" essential for "the deciphering of works of art offered to a given society at a particular time" (ibid., 594). This ability or "competence" includes not only artistic knowledge required to understand the significance of the works but also more abstract and crucial properties such as "taste", "sensitivity", and "disposition". All these properties associated with the acts of deciphering the meaning and values of art objects at the

---

level and social origin

museum galleries constitute a part of the cultural capital for museum visiting.

How could this "ability", or this particular form of cultural capital, be reserved for the culturally, socially, and economically privileged bourgeois? To consider this question, I focus on Bourdieu's discussion on the class dynamics of the cultural capital. Bourdieu argues that despite its overtly stated "generosity" the cultural domain contains a certain mechanism to sustain its exclusivity, or in other words a mechanism to preserve the ability to decipher the art objects and the privilege to utilise the freedom of entering museums and galleries for the interests of those who already possess such ability and privilege. Out of his extensive argument on the issue, I draw on the relations between the cultural capital and "education". Cultural capital, including artistic competence, may be acquired through education; in fact, the degree of artistic competence depends on the level of education. However, it should be noted that education here includes both the formal training at school and the informal one which we would call "upbringing" rather than education. It is true that the longer one stays in formal education the more likely one is to visit museums as Bourdieu himself revealed in his study (Bourdieu and Darbel 1991), but he also points out the partiality of school education itself to those who have had early access to legitimate culture through their cultured family environment. Although school could teach the uninitiated the skills to understand and to appreciate the cultural products, such skills acquired through the formal channel tend to be short-lived (ibid., 36), may be devalued as "'scholastic' or even 'pedantic' in favour of direct experience and simple delight" (Bourdieu 1979, 2), or are simply insufficient because of the deficiency of the system of artistic education (Bourdieu 1968, 605–06). Thus, if school education in reality cannot reduce the inequalities in artistic competence successfully, the majority of museum visitors

remains those who have been predisposed to such cultural activities in their cultured households and those who have had this potential competence confirmed in an education system which prizes "at-home" familiarity with art over scholastic achievement in this particular field (ibid., 602).

Moreover, this preference of family environment over formal education constitutes a part of the process in which the "privilege" to have access to museums and the works of art is "naturalised" and "justified". For these purposes, however, the bourgeoisie can invoke neither the right of birth which their class historically has refused to the aristocracy, nor the right of nature "which, according to 'democratic' ideology, represents universality, that is to say the ground on which all distinctions are abolished" (ibid., 609), nor "the ascetic virtues which allowed the first generation of entrepreneurs to justify their success by their merit" (Bourdieu and Darbel 1991, 111). Instead they resort to "cultural wealth", brought about by their cultural capital, which has been naturalised and made charismatic. Culture as a cultured nature is contingent in the sense that it is to be acquired or learned through formal and informal channels of education as I have discussed above in relation to the case of artistic competence. However, in order to maintain the absoluteness equal to the right of birth, the right of nature, and the ascetic virtues and to conceal its arbitrariness, it had to obliterate and deny its link with education (ibid., 111). Culture thus has been naturalised and has become a cultivated nature bestowed on certain people inherently. Bourdieu compares the rules of art and other cultural works to those of grammar, whose appropriation depends to a great extent on their "unconscious interiorization" through "slow familiarization" (Bourdieu 1968, 601–02). In such perceptions, in front of the combinations of colours and figures represented on the canvases, an art lover feels either "natural"

or "unnatural" by his/her subconscious and instant judgement rather than "right" or "wrong" by his/her conscious reference to certain formulated rules:

> Being an historically constituted system, founded on social reality, this set of instruments of perception whereby a particular society, at a given time, appropriates artistic wealth (and, more generally, cultural wealth) does not depend upon individual wills and consciousness and forces itself upon individuals, often without their knowledge, determining the distinctions which they can make and those which escape them. Every period arranges art representations as a whole according to an institutional system of classification of its own, placing together works between which other periods placed together, and individuals have difficulty in imagining other differences than those which the system of classification available to them allows them to imagine. [ibid., 597]

Thus the cultivated bourgeois naturalises intellectually and historically constituted codes for deciphering the works of art, strategically conceals the process of the acquisition and appropriation of those instruments, and subsequently justifies and monopolises those forms of cultural capital. This prerogative is inherited generation after generation, and they become "cultural nobility" (Bourdieu 1979). The bourgeois actively distinguished themselves from the existing authority of royalties and aristocrats; but, at the same time, the art space also served as a means of distinguishing the bourgeoisie from the working classes. The cultivated bourgeois, "equipped with the ability to appropriate the works of art", legitimate their privilege and guarantee their *distinction*[11] through "their ownership of the means of appropriation of cultural goods" or "their *monopoly* of the manipulation of cultural goods and of the institutional signs of cultural salvation" (Bourdieu and Darbel 1991, 113).

Furthermore, the system consisting of these cultural practices and preferences

---

[11] "*Distinction*" is also used frequently by Bourdieu to represent a specific meaning as well as simply "to distinguish one from another". In Bourdieu's context, it often emphasise its strategic concept of distinguishing oneself from the others to develop the division of class and to maintain the established classes.

closely related to particular social classes is called "habitus". In this concept, Bourdieu mediates two polar views in the studies of individual behaviour in daily life; one regarding practice "solely in terms of individual decision-making", and the other seeing it "as determined by supra-individual 'structures'" (Jenkins 1992, 74). In Bourdieu's own definition, it is the system of:

> durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively "regulated" and "regular" without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor.[12]

To conclude this section, I briefly indicate how my discussion of European art spaces will be further developed in relation to the issues I have raised so far. One is associated with the shift from the exclusive policies typically adopted by the eighteenth-century artistic academies to the new programme to encourage the working-classes to benefit from the works of art in the nineteenth century. As we have seen earlier in this section, the art museum and exhibition have always been "exclusive" in the sense that they were developed in relation to the cultural capital which was distributed and accumulated systematically and unequally among different social classes and the habitus which generated, and was generated by, individual practices and perceptions associated with capital. Nonetheless, the publicness they acquired in the late eighteenth century as an institution of the bourgeois public sphere was not the only kind of publicness they were related to in these two centuries. The new mode of publicness came to be associated with the

---

[12] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977) 72; *The Logic of Practice* (Cambridge: Polity Press; Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990) 53, cited in Johnson 1993, 5.

public museum policies in the course of the development of the new form of governance under nineteenth-century liberal government. The second issue I discuss is that of "classification", which is related to the cultural capital monopolised and naturalised by the cultured classes. As I discussed above with respect to Bourdieu's theory, the historically and institutionally structured code essential to decipher art objects and their displays has been "naturalised" by the bourgeois public for their strategy of "*distinction*". In exhibitions, the code is materialised in the juxtapositions of the objects on the wall or in the gallery, which is based on the classification system where the connections and distinctions between the works of art are determined. The dominant mode of classification applied to art objects is the "history of art" whose order became increasingly prevalent and significant in public art museums all over Europe from the end of the eighteenth century. I discuss how this classification system developed in the European art space in relation to the bourgeois public, institutionalised art criticism, and the epistemological contexts of the time.

3.4. Liberal Government and the Public Art Museum

This section focuses on the development of a new form of public nature associated with "liberal government" – in Foucauldian term – in nineteenth-century Europe. In Section 2, I have discussed how the exhibition spaces for art objects became "public" in the sense that they were reconstituted as a form of the bourgeois public sphere, which was inherently exclusive in its structure. As Bourdieu's empirical research and its subsequent studies show, access to the public sphere is restricted to those who were capable of utilising it by means of their cultural capital. Nevertheless, since the nineteenth century, art museums have attempted to

broaden their audience to include the previously excluded strata of the society – initially to working-class men, then extended to white women, children, and, in the twentieth century, to ethnic minorities. A series of these efforts are partly interpreted in relation to the development of "liberal government" in the West from the nineteenth century onwards. As Bennett (2000) states, "the modern art museum has constituted the very model of the new forms of cultural administration required by liberal forms of government" (1415).

What does "liberal government" mean? How can it be related to the modern practices of art museums? First, I shall define the particular meanings of "governmentality" and "liberal government" employed in the context of Foucauldian discourse. Governmentality is defined in Foucault's own words as "the conduct of conduct" – "a more or less methodical and rationally reflected 'way of doing things', or 'art', for acting on the actions of individuals, taken either singly or collectively, so as to shape, guide, correct and modify the ways in which they conduct themselves".[13] Liberal government, as a particular form of governmentality, presupposes "the existence of subjects who are free in the primary sense of living and thinking beings endowed with bodily and mental capacities" (Dean 1999, 13). Those who are governed are "free in that they are actors, i.e. it is possible for them to act and to think in a variety of ways, and sometimes in ways not foreseen by authorities". A key point here is the implication of "self-guidance" or "self-regulation". As Dean (1999, 12) suggests, "government encompasses not only how we exercise authority over others, or how we govern abstract entities such as states and populations, but *how we govern ourselves*" (italics mine). What would

---

[13] Michél Foucault [Maurice Florence], "(Auto)biography: 'Michel Foucault 1926–1984'"; *History of the Present* 4 (Spring), 1988, quoted in Burchell 1996, 19.

make this government distinctively "liberal"? Liberal government should not simply be equated with unlimited freedom, complete *laisser fair*, or potential anarchism; because it is "not about governing less but about the continual injunction that politicians and rulers should govern cautiously, delicately, economically, modestly" (Barry, et al. 1996b, 8). Liberal government accordingly adopts liberal principles as a particular mode of governmental power which is distinguished from any forms of power previously practised in Europe including the sovereignty of absolutism and the disciplinary mode of government of early modern European society.

According to Foucault (1980), sovereignty represents a juridico-discursive mode of power. It is "juridico-discursive" in the sense that it is exercised by means of laws and proclamations. This mode of power is defined as "a form of power which, emanating from a central source (the sovereign), deployed a range of legal and symbolic resources in order to exact obedience from the population" (Bennett 1995, 22). Its primary aim is essentially "the common welfare and the salvation of all", which is, in this case, equated with "the exercise of sovereignty" itself (Foucault 1991, 94–95). This common and general good is only achieved by "a state of affairs where all the subjects without exception obey the laws, accomplish the tasks expected of them, practise the trade to which they are assigned, and respect the established order so far as this order conforms to the laws imposed by God on nature and men; in other words, 'the common good' means essentially obedience to the law, either that of their earthy sovereign or that of God, the absolute sovereign" (ibid.). This form of power corresponds to the administrative practices of early art museums in Europe, including the royal collections increasingly made public in the eighteenth century and the *envoi* system developed in Napoleonic France which

distributed works of art from the national collections in Paris to provincial art museums (Bennett 1995, 26–27; 1998, 116–17).[14] In either cases, at least to a certain degree, the public displays of art collections were meant to legitimate and to promote the power of the sovereign; their ultimate end was single and circular – the exercise of sovereignty itself.[15]

In contrast to the juridico discursive power of sovereign described above, governmental power presents some distinctive characters. Referring to Guillaume de La Perrière (c.1499–1565), Foucault (1991) describes how different those two forms of power are in their subject, objective, method, and function. First of all, while the target of sovereign power is the territory and its inhabitants, governmental power is directed to "things" – more precisely "a sort of complex composed of men and things" (ibid., 93). In other words, governmental power is concerned with population and its various conditions such as wealth, natural resources, ways of acting and thinking, accidents and misfortunes. Government therefore disposes things for multiple purposes instead of imposing laws to enhance its sovereignty:

---

[14] For the details of the *envoi* system, see Sherman 1989.

[15] Also see Hooper-Greenhill 1989, 64.

> Government is defined as a right manner of disposing things so as to lead not to the form of the common good, as the jurists' texts would have said, but to an end which is 'convenient' for each of the things that are to be governed. This implies a plurality of specific aims: for instance, government will have to ensure that the greatest possible quantity of wealth is produced, that the people are provided with sufficient means of subsistence, that the population is enabled to multiply, etc. There is a whole series of specific finalities, then, which become the objective of government as such. In order to achieve these various finalities, things must be disposed – and this term, *dispose*, is important because with sovereignty instrument that allowed it to achieve its aim – that is to say, obedience to the laws – was the law itself; law and sovereignty were absolutely inseparable. On the contrary, with government it is a question not of imposing law on men, but of disposing things: that is to say, of employing tactics rather than laws, and even of using laws themselves as tactics – to arrange things in such a way that, through a certain number of means, such and such ends may be achieved. [ibid., 95]

However, it was not until the development of liberal government in the mid- to late-nineteenth century that culture came to be considered as a useful means of government in this sense. The works and institutions of high culture came to be strategically organised through the conception that they could spread new forms of self-government through the population as a whole.

Bennett offers extensive discussions of the ways this developed in the museum policies of England in the latter half of the century (see Bennett 1995; 1997; 1998; 2000). The project of the South Kensington Museum advocated by Henry Cole (1808–82) in the middle of the century, as Bennett (2000) argues,[16] evidently revealed the process that art and the museum were tactically disposed as part of the general programme of reforming the working classes into self-regulating moral beings who were capable of monitoring and controlling their own manners and minds. The South Kensington Museum – the predecessor of the Victoria and

---

[16] My subsequent argument in this paragraph is dependent on the series of works by Bennett, especially Bennett (2000) in which he focuses on the relationship between works of art and governmental power.

Albert Museum – was established in 1856 as a result of the extensive campaign of Cole for the museum which was committed to maximising public access.[17] It was open until ten o'clock at night on Monday to Saturday, three days of which were free of charge. Sunday opening had not yet been realised but was already in its perspective. In 1867, regarding the extension of the male suffrage to "the residuum of the English people", Cole proposed that it would be "the positive duty of Parliament to try and get these people who are going to be voters, out of the public-house, and I know no better mode of doing it than to open museums freely to them".[18] It was indeed not the first time that the art museum was considered as a more desirable "rational" form of leisure activities alternative to the kind of pastimes associated with the working-classes – such as drinking, gambling, sabbath-breaking, etc. – as well as to the rioting or political actions.[19] However, what was distinctive about Cole's initiative was that his contemplation was not restricted to offering the museum simply as a rational alternative to the public house or the rioting but that he was concerned about the enlightening function of the museum to work on the inner and moral transformation of the workingman. In Cole's reform programme, the workingman was turned into an elevated being who would choose voluntarily not to drink; and he accordingly would *want* to save, *want* to practice sexual restraint, and *want* to work (ibid., 1418). Any coercive actions

---

[17] See Taylor 1999. Cole clearly maintained that the target of the museum was the working classes: "It is much less for the rich that the State should provide public galleries of paintings and objects of art and science than for those classes who would be absolutely destitute of the enjoyment of them, unless they are provided by the State . . . On Monday nights especially, great numbers are strictly of the working classes, to whom a day's visit would entail the loss of a day's wages" (Quoted in ibid., 75).

[18] Select Committee: para. 808, p. 730, quoted in Bennett 1998a, 126. Also see Pearson 1982, 35, in which Cole's writing making a similar point is quoted and discussed.

such as a ban on drinking had to be avoided by all means, and the autonomy and freedom of the workingman had to be respected. This form of power is contrastive to sovereign power which is restrained by its ultimate single and circular purpose and which depends on the exercise of laws (Bennett 1995, 22–23). Instead of magnifying sovereign power, art in the context of the liberal reform of art museums in the nineteenth century was expected to serve various functions as an instrument for civilising the populace. While power of the juridico-discursive mode achieved its governance by means of enforcement, the nineteenth-century reformers carefully disposed works of art in the museum for the workingman to help him curb his own behaviours autonomously. This disposition of the museum as part of the promotion of the self-regulation and self-management of the working-class was adopted by other institutions later in the century such as the Whitechapel Gallery and the Tate (Koven 1994; Taylor 1994; 1999).

These particular relations between culture and government were promoted in the circumstances specific to late-nineteenth-century England. I raise three principal factors, specific to this country, in confirming the links between art and its self-reforming effects on the male working classes. First, this distinctive English phenomenon is associated with the development of liberalism led by a number of "liberal reformers" (which include Cole) from the end of the eighteenth century. Those reformers could not rely on legal control of the behaviours of the populace. Cole was well aware of the limit that liberal government could interfere into the workingman's life; "behaviour will be changed through the voluntary actions of free and sovereign individuals, but cannot compel any specific change of conduct" (Bennett 2000, 1416). The autonomy of the subject had to be respected; then moral

---

[19] See Pearson 1982, 35–36; Taylor 1999, 33, 65–66; Trodd 1994, 33.

transformations were completely dependent on the voluntary actions of individual citizens in civil society. The second factor is the development of new conceptions of population influenced by Thomas Robert Malthus (1766–1834), which argued that overpopulation would essentially cause poverty and vice. Those conceptions "placed a premium on the need for working-class men to develop new forms of self-restraint in their sexual and leisure activities" (Bennett 1997, 166).[20] The third is the rise of Romantic notions of art at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, according to which the sphere of art came to be considered as "a special realm providing a set of resources which, in allowing the conduct of various kinds of work on the self, would result in a harmonisation of the diverse aspects of the individual's personality" (Bennett 1998, 122).[21]

This insight into the peculiar relations between government and culture in the West gives a contextually specific account of the development of museums as "public" institutions. Liberal reformers by no means opened up the museum space to leave it to the devices of the working classes or to encourage them to act arbitrarily; on the contrary, the museum was utilised to "govern" the lower classes in a particular, "liberal" fashion.

---

[20] Also see Bennett 1998, 124–26; 2000, 1416–18. He also points out the significance of the *Poor Law Amendment Act 1834* which "embodied a concern with making the poor responsible in accordance with the moral imperatives of Malthusianism in ways that reflected the newly emerging forms of liberal government" (1998, 124) in contrast to the eighteenth-century forms of poor law based on the notion of police.

[21] Also see Bennett 1997, 166; 2000, 1418–19. Also note that it was usually and almost exclusively aesthetic objects – not scientific curiosities – that were accorded the public task of reforming the uncivilised classes before the later part of the century (Bennett 1997, 166).

3.5. Historicisation of Art and *Epistemes*

The significance of art history in European and American museums is recognised by both old and new museologists. Prior to the development of the historical mode of classification, the most fashionable curatorial mode in the private galleries exhibiting the private collections of royalty and other privileged individuals was the so-called connoisseur's or gentlemanly hang. Its distinction from the art historical display was evident at a glance; pictures were hung frame to frame to cover the walls like a tapestry in a mosaic pattern (see Figure 3.1, p. 98). This arrangement would have been what visitors encountered at the academy exhibitions both in France and Britain in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (see Figure 3.2, p. 98). Then, since the mid-eighteenth century, those collections of paintings and sculptures which became increasingly available for the observation of the wider public were rearranged according to artists, national schools, and chronology all over Europe and the United States. In German-speaking regions, this new curatorial standard was materialised earlier and more enthusiastically than anywhere by several Enlightening "reformers" including Lambert Krahe, Johann Joachim Winckelmann, and Christian von Michel (or Cristian von Mechel) (see Pevsner 1976 for the details of the German-speaking regions). Winckelmann's achievement, *History of Ancient Art* (1764), was the most notable in the representation of this mode of classification of art objects, and as regards curatorial practices Michel was the leading figure, responsible for the rearrangement of two royal collections – one in Düsseldorf (1755/56) and the other in the Belvedere Palaces in Vienna (1779) (see Duncan and Wallach 1980, 455; Pevsner 1976, 121 for Düsseldorf, and Duncan and Wallach 1980, 455; Kaufmann 1994, 150–51; McClellan 1994, 79–80 for the Belvedere). In the introduction to his

catalogue of the Belvedere's imperial collection, he declares: "The purpose . . . was to use this . . . beautiful building, so suitable because of having many separate rooms, so that the arrangement should be so far as possible a visible history of art" (quoted in Pevsner 1976, 121). Then, in the nineteenth century, this art-historical programme of the art museum became a common practice all over Europe. In Paris, the Louvre (then called, the Museé Napoléon) was completely rehung by national school and important artists in 1810 (see Hooper-Greenhill 1989, 69–70; Markus 1993; McClellan 1994), and the National Gallery in London realised its art-historical arrangement later in the century (Duncan 1995, 45; Taylor 1999, 47). American museums were not unaware of those changes across the Atlantic; the Metropolitan Museum in New York followed the European examples in its newly reinstalled galleries in 1910 (Duncan 1995, 63). Thus the classificatory mode which became and remains prevalent in Western museums as a standard was established by the beginning of the twentieth century.

The growing interest in making the history of art visible in the galleries was only a part of a more comprehensive programme which involved various practices of the art museum. The collectors became increasingly conscious about the art-historical gaps in their collections which should be filled in by acquiring "representative works" of the period and the region,[22] and the museum galleries themselves came to be inscribed with the names and images of artistic geniuses recognised in the historical survey of art instead of those of great patrons or princes (Duncan 1995, 29–32, 45–47; Duncan and Wallach 1980, 463). My purpose in this section is to examine the significance of the studies of the development of

---

[22] See Duncan and Wallach 1980, 454–56; Fisher 1991, 22–23. For specific cases, see Duncan 1995 (the Louvre in Paris, the National Gallery in London, and the

"classification" and their relationship with the exhibition spaces. Especially, I focus on the development of the art historical order since the mid-eighteenth century in the West. However, I do not intend to celebrate the emergence of art history as the most advanced code for art collection and display. What is important about the study of classification is the recovery of the social and cultural context which made various classification systems possible and natural. Through those systems associated with contemporary conditions, certain forms of "knowledge" may be developed.

First of all, I make two points to clarify my concept of classification, which is overtly informed by Foucault's concept of the epistemological consensus shared among the contemporaries of a certain society at a certain time – the *episteme* (see 3.1). The first point is that art history can be regarded as a mode of classification in the sense that it differentiates and integrates objects which had not originally been created with those divisions and groupings in mind – just like the classificatory table of plants contrived by Linné (Carl von, 1707–78). In the eyes of contemporaries, the collections and displays of early museums seem completely unsystematic and simply lacking in any classificatory order. The Renaissance proto-museums (*Kunstkammern*, *Wunderkammern*, or "cabinets of curiosities")[23] represent what seems to us an irrational assemblage of artificial and natural objects of perplexingly diverse origins and categories – including sculpture, painting, jewellery, objects of natural science, mineral specimens, antiquities, and freaks.[24]

Metropolitan Museum in New York); Sherman 1989 (French regional museums).

[23] According to Shelton 1994, 180, the collections and displays of curiosities flourished all over Europe from c. 1550, began to wane during the seventeenth century, and became very rare by the mid eighteenth century.

[24] See Markus 1993, 190–91; Shelton 1994, 182 for the detailed descriptions of the collections of curiosities.

Regarding the gentlemanly hang I mentioned above, it seems wildly absurd and totally unreasonable compared to the "rational" and "scientific" arrangement of art history where each work is moderately spaced and clearly labelled with the name of its maker and the year it was produced. It looks ridiculously crammed with the paintings of different origins and far from the orderliness where visitors could appreciate individual works and understand certain meanings in their juxtapositions. However, those seemingly chaotic situations in the exhibition spaces before the advent of art history do not indicate the absence of any classificatory mode. Those spaces only formed and displayed their collections according to different classificatory systems which made those arrangements look perfectly natural to contemporary collectors and beholders. Moreover, the concept of *epistemes* would allow us to discuss the common ground – the complex relationships ranging over a variety of sciences in their broadest sense in a particular period – where those modes of classification were possible (Foucault 1972, 191). Foucault has converted the impossibility of a certain classificatory system in a certain society at a certain time into the impossibility of the *episteme* where such a mode would be possible (Foucault 1970, xv–xvi). The irrationality we attribute to the assembly of "miscellaneous" curiosities of the Renaissance collection and the tapestry-like display of the private galleries is due to the lack of our familiarity with the *epistemes* which cause such combinations and divisions to be considered as rational.

The second point is that the importance of the study of changing classification systems is not to indicate a natural development from the "primitive" categories of the Renaissance system toward the "sophisticated" mode of art history but to show the historical contingency of those classifications. The changes in classificatory

standard in the exhibition space reveal that all divisions made to distinguish one object from another have been provisionally and locally constructed and that art history – the now standardised and unquestioned code which determines the sequence and the juxtaposition of paintings and sculptures in the galleries – is by no means an exception. Most objects classified and arranged either in the Renaissance cabinets or in the public museums were "naïve objects", as Phillip Fisher calls them (1991, 6); because those objects were originally designed for certain purposes before they were unexpectedly appropriated by the exhibition spaces (ibid., 93–96). As Duncan and Wallach (1980, 463) write about those naïve objects in the museums today:

> The museum environment forces the experience of art into its art historical mould and generally excludes other meanings. Stripped of all references to their original function, portraits, altarpieces, allegorical statues and other artefacts become individual cultural triumphs, each labelled with special attention to the artist, his dates and nationality.

Thus the transformation from one classificatory system to another does not indicate continuous efforts either to recover the "original" and "authentic" meanings of objects or to achieve one fixed goal of perfection. At any time, those naïve objects are only contextualised temporarily according to a set of classificatory codes available at the time. The study of *epistemes* does not provide a continuous evolutionary description of history; it reveals a series of epistemological shifts or breaks. It is concerned with examining the contemporary relationships of various sciences, aiming at rediscovering "on what basis knowledge and theory became possible" and "within what space of order knowledge was constituted" (Foucault 1970, xxi–xxii). Instead, the analysis informed by the concept of the *episteme* investigates the relationships between seemingly unrelated compositions of knowledge in a certain époque. For instance, Barbara Stafford (1994) considers

"the ostentatiously accumulative character of pre-Enlightenment art and science" (218) in comparison to the mentality of contemporary *polyhistory* in her study of the Enlightenment entertainment of art and science in the eighteenth century. The history manifested by the *episteme*, therefore, is not that of "its growing perfection" towards "an objectivity in which today's science can finally be recognized" but that of "its conditions of possibility" – the "configurations within the *space* of knowledge which have given rise to the diverse forms of empirical science" (Foucault 1970, xxii).

Foucault identifies three *epistemes* of Western culture – the Renaissance, the Classical, and the modern, and art history definitely belongs to the third *episteme* which became predominant in the nineteenth century. This *episteme* is characterised by a particular sense of "history" – "evolutionary history", which evolved a particular set of knowledges such as geology, biology, archaeology, anthropology, and other historically-conscious disciplines. The proximity between things becomes possible there, only "because they have both been formed at the same time, and the one immediately after the other in the emergence of the successions" (ibid., 218). In other words, in Bennett's (1995) paraphrase of Foucault's definition, "things ceased to be arranged as parts of taxonomic tables and came, instead, in being inserted within the flow of time, to be differentiated in terms of the positions accorded them within evolutionary series" (96). The development of this particular sense of history is evident in the process in which paintings and sculptures were progressively reclassified after the mid-eighteenth century. The art historical hang, as McClellan (1994) states, serves to "demonstrate historical evolution within national schools" (3). What is most important in the art historical order is neither the visible "style" nor the "subject

matter" of a painting; it is the date of the production that determines the relevant place for the painting in the historical whole. The complete history of art essentially represents the evolutionary progress of human creativity which culminates "now" and "the future".

Moreover, this tendency of "historicisation" further developed in relation to the social conditions of contemporary Europe. I consider the increasing significance of art history in the context of the bourgeois public sphere. I make two points here in relation to my earlier discussion of the public sphere (3.2). The first point is the importance of art history for the institution of an aesthetic judgement that could be the bourgeoisie's alone. The art-historical arrangement was not approved by the gentleman connoisseurs; as an aristocratic connoisseur commented on the Belvedere Palace in Vienna[25] in 1785: "One who desires an art history can enter [the museum] but the sensitive man is kept away" (Duncan and Wallach 1980, 455). The growing distrust of gentlemanly tastes and the deliberate promotion of art-historical principles are evident among the officials of the National Gallery in London in the mid-nineteenth century who exchanged their views on the curatorial policies of the new national collection (Duncan 1995, 44–45).

> By the late nineteenth century in both Europe and America, museum officials everywhere took it as a given that public art museums were obliged to meet the needs of this bourgeois citizen. . . . It [art historical arrangement] stood not simply as a modern, "scientific" alternative to princely or gentlemanly collections but as an explicit rejection of the political values implicit in those older kinds of collections. So urgent was its symbolic import, that in the course of the century, even royal collections were rehung chronologically and by school. Eventually, art history would seem the most natural way to order a national gallery. [Duncan 1995, 49]

---

[25] In 1776, the Viennese Royal Collection in the Belvedere was arranged by Cristian von Mechel according to art-historical order. The works of art were divided into national schools and historical periods, and each painting was simply and uniformly framed with clear labels. See Duncan and Wallach 1980, 455.

The second point which strengthens the link between the new historical perspective and the bourgeois public sphere is the relationship between art history and institutionalised art criticism. The institutional and professionalised world of art criticism involving journalism and the art critic characterised the bourgeois public sphere in the eighteenth century. According to Fisher (1991), the tasks of professional art critics include authenticating works of art, defining their economic value, dating those works, and placing them in historical sequences; and, to achieve those tasks, they developed the art-historical perspective, i.e. "sophisticated keys to style and period" (22). Even their aesthetic and economic judgement on contemporary works is dependent on this historical perspective. For it is possible only when the critic can historicise those works as "the future's past" in the chronological table of art works:

> The "price" of a contemporary painting is a function of a prediction of its future, and for this future value to be determined, criticism must move closer and closer to a historicization of the present, determining on the spot what the historical place of new objects might eventually be even as they are produced. Without this speculative, prophetic act of criticism, the object has, as a commodity, no value. The painting is priced this way because it is not yet at its destination, the museum. For a short time the painting will be "at large" until it is ever so slightly "past". Once this probationary period is over, it will come to rest in sequence or will disappear. [ibid., 28]

Thus, in the West, the art museum developed as a part of the 'historical' sphere, which involved the development of other museum types associated with a wide range of historical disciplines such as anthropology, archaeology, and biology. Today the historical perspectives remain one of the most important aspects for the curatorial practices of increasingly diversifying institutions, including those specialising in war, transport, and popular culture. There, visitors will see, learn, and "experience" the historical unfolding of various material products and

technologies.

3.6. Conclusion

The new museological researches, with their contextual concern, thus offer complex and multi-faceted accounts of the development of public art museums in the West. Engaged with four particular issues raised by current new museological researches, I have shown how public art museums may be regarded as the institutions specifically associated with the cultures and societies of the modern West. I have discussed how these institutions developed in relation to a wide range of social and cultural conditions peculiar to Europe from the late seventeenth century throughout the nineteenth century. I have now set up the basis on which the development of the public art museums in Japan will be discussed from the next chapter onward as a process of "transculturation" between the institutions exclusively developed in modern Europe and the conditions specific to modern Japanese society.

To conclude this chapter, I indicate the implications of the four theoretical issues to my subsequent analysis of the Japanese development of public art museums. I make three points here. The first point is concerned with a particular trajectory of modern Japanese society and politics since the late nineteenth century. The nineteenth-century "modernisation"/"westernisation" policies in Japan did not mean to materialise "liberalism" and "democracy". On the contrary, "modern Japan" – at least before the end of World War II (1945) – had been characterised by absolutism under the deified Emperor and the oligarchy and totalitarianism of military regime. In such circumstances, neither the bourgeois public sphere nor liberal government could have evolved. Accordingly, the

Japanese version of the French Salon (i.e. the prestigious, official art exhibition held annually in the capital city) did not develop as a part of the bourgeois public sphere and assumed particular characteristics associated with the "Emperor system" (Chapter 4). The particular relations between culture and liberal government have never been established in Japan, either. The situation in modern Japan was characterised by a distinctive lack of these relations. This "lack" of liberal concerns with cultural administration continues even after the "democratisation" of Japanese society in the post-war period. This fact explains the characteristic indifference of national and local authorities to the management of the museums, which is mentioned by Japanese museologists as one of the elements contributing to the emptiness of the institutions.

The second point is associated with the exclusivity of art museums in the West developed in relation to the "cultured" middle classes. As I mentioned in Section 3, Japanese researchers have already proved that the Japanese art spaces are as exclusive as their Western counterparts. However, the forms of cultural capital and habitus required for museum visiting are variant in different societies; and so are their relations to particular social classes, institutions, and agents. In order to elaborate my discussion of these issues, I introduce Bourdieu's concept of "field" in the next chapter.

The last point I make here is the fact that Japanese public art museums did not develop as a part of the whole "historical" sphere involving a wide range of museums and other institutions. My discussion on the development of art-historical perspectives in Section 5 will prove important especially when I delineate the adoption of "art" ("*bijutsu*" 「美術」) from the West and its distinctive development in nineteenth-century Japan (Chapter 4), the historical stasis

associated with the art groups in the early twentieth century (Chapter 5), and the belated arrival of the historical perspectives in Japanese *bijutsu* after World War II (Chapters 6 and 7).

In the next chapter, I shall launch my discussion on the Japanese development of art spaces. The main focus is on the Bunten (文展) – the annual, official art exhibition sponsored by the Ministry of Education; I examine the process of its adoption as a Japanese version of the French Salon and its development in the socio-cultural configuration specific to contemporary Japan as a process of "transculturation". The concept of transculturation denies a hierarchical understanding of the relationships between the dominant and the subordinate cultures. As I discussed in the concluding section of the last chapter, it is mutual and interactive in the sense that it is not a matter of the dominant automatically controlling the subordinate or the subordinate unexceptionally losing authority over the elements from the dominant other. The Western elements associated with the museum were imported to Japan in the process of the development of the institution. The process was associated with the westernisation policy which was strongly promoted by contemporary governments, in which sense the balance of power between the westernising force and the one conflicting with it was by no means equal. Nonetheless, the dominant, Western culture was not introduced exactly as it was, as a whole, to Japan. This was an irregular and contingent process. Various elements associated with the museum development in the West were partially and fastidiously interpreted, adopted, and developed according to the requirements of Japanese political, social, and cultural circumstances. Some elements were more valued than others, some were completely neglected, and some modified and transformed in relation to the elements specific to contemporary

Japan. At the same time, Japanese culture, which may be considered "dominant" as a "native" culture of the country that managed to maintain its sovereignty, also transformed in the course of "contacts" with the alien culture. As we will see, Japan may have "japanised" the Western cultural elements to adopt them into the foreign environment, while the cultural elements which had long been developed in Japan were also compelled to interact with the Western elements.

PAGE/PAGES EXCLUDED UNDER INSTRUCTION FROM UNIVERSITY

Chapter 4

The Bunten Exhibition and the *Iemoto* System

4.1. Introduction

In this and the next chapter, I focus on the establishment of two institutionalised forms of art in Japan before World War II. One of them is the "Japanese Salon" – the "Bunten" (「文展」) exhibition – which started in 1907, and the other is the first "empty museum", the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (Tokyo-fu Bijutsukan [東京府美術館]), which was established in 1926. Regarding the latter, as I have already discussed in Chapter 2, the "empty museums" – those without collections, permanent displays, and curators – are not exclusively characteristic of the institutions founded during the museum boom of the 1970s and 80s. As regards the Bunten, on which I focus in this chapter, it was an annual exhibition, not a museum building, which was held at a temporary art gallery built for a domestic industrial exposition until the Metropolitan Museum opened in 1926. However, as the French Salon on which the Bunten was explicitly modelled played an important role in the early development of the public art institutions in Europe (see 3.2), the Bunten also indicated certain elements and tendencies which would prove significant in the formation of the empty museums after the mid-1920s. In other words, the "Japanese Salon" developed some distinctive features which later orientated the development of the distinctive style of Japanese public art museums in the course of the interactions between the Western model and the cultural conditions specific to contemporary Japanese society.

The Bunten opened its first show with the exhibits classed into Japanese-style painting (*Nihon-ga* [日本画]), Western-style painting (*Seiyo-ga* [西洋画]), and

Sculpture (*Chokoku* [彫刻]) at a temporary art gallery in the district of Ueno in Tokyo in October 1907. This competitive exhibition was explicitly modelled on the French Salon and was produced by "modern gentlemen" who had experienced the glamour of the official art exhibition in Paris. It is a famous episode that Makino Nobuaki (牧野伸顕, 1861–1949), who had just transferred from Italy to Austria as a legate, and three Japanese bureaucrats of the Ministry of Education on their official visit to the Exposition Universalle in Paris in 1900, in a meeting in Vienna, agreed that such an official art exhibition as the Salon should be introduced to their own country. One of the bureaucrats, Masaki Naohiko (正木直彦, 1862–1940), was appointed to the post of Chancellor of the Tokyo Art College (1901–32) after his return and launched a campaign for the Japanese Salon. This agreement was finally materialised when Makino was appointed Minister of Education by Prime Minister Saionji Kinmochi (西園寺公望, 1849–1940) who was reputed for his Western-trained intelligence and liberalism. At first glance, the establishment of the Bunten seems to represent a tentative completion of the institutionalisation programme for "art" under the westernisation and modernisation policy which had been promoted by Meiji governments for decades. Nevertheless, it was by no means a complete replication of its French model. In fact, the Japanese Salon was launched and developed in its distinctive form through a series of selections, negotiations, and interactions which were made under the political, social, and cultural conditions specific to contemporary Japan. The development of the Bunten showed a process of "transculturation". It represented a sphere where the Salon system which had developed first in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France and then in other European countries encountered the peculiar circumstances of Meiji Japan which had little to do with the conditions where the

system originally evolved.

My discussion in this chapter focuses on three institutionalised forms of art in three different sections. The next section is concerned with the Bunten exhibition and my general approach to the issue, which establishes the basis of my further examination of its characters in relation to two other "institutions". I consider the Bunten exhibition as an institution that was invented to produce "new classics" of Japanese art for the future, or, in Fisher's terms, to designate "the future's past" (see 3.5). Based on the progressively historicised pre-modern works, the Bunten was expected to authorise selected contemporary paintings and sculptures as what would constitute the masterpieces "of the past" in the chronological sequence of Japanese art history when viewed from a point of "the future". Like its European counterparts, the Japanese Salon represented a system which made official decisions on what artistic values should be promoted and which works of contemporary art should be selected to adorn the galleries of a prestigious annual exhibition. However, in the process of adopting the European institution, the Japanese exhibition evolved certain distinctive characteristics.

The second "institution" of art which is discussed in the third section is "art" ("*bijutsu*" 「美術」) itself.. That contemporary Japanese concept of "art" ("*bijutsu*") was an "institution" produced as a result of the development leading to the autonomisation of the artistic field in the early modern period has been recognised and examined by a growing number of recent studies particularly in the discipline of Japanese art history.[1] These studies show how *bijutsu* was historically and culturally composed through the development of various organisations in modern

---

[1] The groundbreaking work in this subject is Kitazawa 1989. Other studies include Kinoshita 1993; Kitazawa 2000; Sato 1996.

Japan including different forms of exhibitions and expositions, the national museums, and the art college. Until the beginning of the Meiji era (1868–1912), the term, "*bijutsu*", itself had not existed in Japan. It was literally "invented" when government officials translated the regulations of the World Exposition held in Vienna in 1873, and it acquired its current meaning as "visual" or "fine" arts, including painting and sculpture, in the process of its "institutionalisation" under the initiative of the centralised nation-state. However, as these studies have revealed, the "translated" conception of *bijutsu* did not simply duplicate its Western model. Although it was orientated toward the Western conception of art, *bijutsu* developed in its particular form in the specific circumstances of Meiji Japan. The establishment of the Bunten which consisted exclusively of painting and sculpture certainly commemorates a significant moment in the history of the formation of *bijutsu* when the institutionalisation programme of *bijutsu* by Meiji government according to the Western models had been fulfilled to a certain extent. However, it is more precisely regarded as the earliest occasion which revealed the elements which would develop the characteristic emptiness of Japanese public art museums throughout the twentieth century. In this sense, the Japanese Salon should not be considered as a "neat" result, achievement, or conclusion which all the efforts for westernisation and modernisation for decades finally managed to reach so much as a complex of chaotic, contradictory, and transforming elements which would develop later in the empty galleries of the prefectural art museums.

The third institution is the so-called "art group" ("*bijutsu dantai*"「美術団体」), which is the subject of Section 4. I use the term "art group", which is a literal translation from the Japanese term (*bijutsu dantai* [美術団体]) that is commonly used today, in order to distinguish it from a group of artists in a Western sense.

As I shall discuss further in this and subsequent chapters, the art group is a form of organisation historically and culturally specific to modern Japan and its art world. It is an institution that developed after the Meiji period in relation to the "*iemoto* system" ("*iemoto sei*" 「家元制」) – a system which had long been associated with various forms of artistic and cultural practices in pre-modern Japan and which still remains, most explicitly in Japanese traditional arts today. I identify the emerging identities of these art groups in the ongoing internal conflicts among the artists who found themselves forcibly and neatly classified into the three official categories at the Bunten, i.e. Japanese-style painting, Western-style painting, and sculpture. One of the main purposes of the Bunten was precisely to unify a number of those small groups with different aesthetic tendencies, technical skills, genres of practice, and political stances. Officials attempted to exhibit these groups, which were usually not on very friendly terms, all together as part of the three categories of the official sphere of *bijutsu*.

Before moving on to the next section, I introduce the conceptual framework of "field" by Pierre Bourdieu (1993, 1996), which will inform my discussions in this and subsequent chapters. This concept allows me to examine the complexity and solidity of the "category" or "world" of *bijutsu* by focusing on the shifting, and temporary relations between various agents (both individuals and organisations) pertaining to the production, distribution, and reception of *bijutsu* objects – i.e. artists, critics, dealers, curators, art lovers, government officials, museums, schools, etc. A field is in general defined as: "a veritable social universe where, in accordance with its particular laws there accumulates a particular form of capital and where relations of force of a particular type are exerted" (Bourdieu 1993, 163). This universe consists of a wide range of agents, most typically struggling over "the

question of knowing who is part of the universe"(ibid., 164), and its "laws" are determined by "the relations between the positions agents occupy in the field" (Johnson 1993, 6). However, the purpose of this thesis is not to reconstruct the comprehensive networks of various agents in the art field in Japan as Bourdieu (1996) did in his work on the European case. My concern with this concept is focused on the "autonomy" or "purity" of the field. According to Bourdieu's model, while homologous with others in structure, each field is autonomous. For instance, the art field functions independent of other fields, let's say, of literature, politics, and economy.

> The important fact, for the interpretation of works, is that this autonomous social universe functions somewhat like a prism which *refracts* every external determination: demographic, economic or political events are always retranslated according to the specific logic of the field, and it is by this intermediary that they act on the logic of the development of works. [Bourdieu 1993, 164]

A field is distinguished from other fields by the particular kinds of "stakes which are at stake" – cultural goods, intellectual distinction, political power, etc. – over which struggles would take place. Each has "a different logic and taken-for-granted structure of necessity and relevance which is both the product and producer of the habitus which is specific and appropriate to the field" (Jenkins 1992, 84). As Bourdieu (1996, 113) metaphorically describes it, a field is "the site of a sort of well-regulated ballet in which individuals and groups dance their own steps, always contrasting themselves with each other, sometimes clashing, sometimes dancing to the same tune, then turning their backs on each other in often explosive separations, and so on, up until the present time".

4.2. The Bunten and the Designation of "New Classics"

To decide on what would be recognised as "classics" in the future from a number of contemporary works brought in was one of the major functions expected of the exhibitions of contemporary art sponsored by official institutions including the French Salon, the Royal Academy of Arts (London), and the Bunten. The designation of "new classics" requires some kind of canon consisting of renowned works and artists, *the* "classics", on the basis of which the selection of new masterpieces would be made. The official exhibitions in their early days in France and Britain explicitly focused on producing new works of history painting in reference to the tastes and aesthetics prevalent among the eighteenth-century social and cultural elite that highly evaluated this "noble genre" of painting. The renowned works of history painting were often mentioned in the lectures of the Academies, studied carefully by students, and displayed as "examples" at the exhibitions. It was on the basis of those recognised classics that the Academies recruited and trained new talents to secure the further development of the most celebrated form of art. Today, as I have discussed in the last chapter (see 3.5), the standard classics of art are determined according to the criterion which has become predominant since the nineteenth century first in Europe and then in the rest of the world – art history. The works from the past are classified to form a chronological table of great geniuses and their masterpieces by their national schools, and the contemporary works are evaluated in terms of the potential position they might occupy along the evolutionary chronology of those classics. No matter what criteria were applied for the selection of exhibits, the official exhibitions played an important role in the system to create new classics; the award winners were typically honoured by the official purchase of their works, which proudly adorned

the permanent museum buildings (McClellan 1994).

The Bunten, the Japanese Salon exhibition, established a similar system which it was envisaged would function as its European counterparts. It involved prizes and official acquisitions by the Ministry of Education, which sponsored the exhibition. The Ministry appointed judges for the selection of the official purchases from the members of the hanging committee; and the purchases were selected from the works of awardees and committee members within the annual budget of ¥2,000–3,000 (Kumamoto 1957 [*Gendai no me* 30]).[2] These official acquisitions were, according to an initial plan, to be permanently stored and displayed at a new national museum specialising in modern/contemporary art, separate from the antiques at the Imperial Museums[3] (ibid.; Kitazawa 2000, 55–56; Kumamoto 1958 [*Gendai no me* 45]). Moreover, the Bunten displayed works exempted from the normal course of judgement. They consisted of the works by current and old members of the hanging committee, by all the first and second prize winners from the past, and by the artists recommended and agreed by more than three-quarter members of the committee.[4] Those "authorised" works outside the award system legitimated the members of the Committee as recognised artists and the judgements they made in the past by reminding the audience of its previous

---

[2] According to Kumamoto, the annual budget allocated by the Ministry for the Bunten exhibition was ¥10,000 in total.

[3] Three Imperial Museums were established at the end of the nineteenth century; the first one opened in Tokyo in 1886 (Teikoku [Teishitsu] Bijutsukan [帝国(帝室)美術館]), which was followed by two institutions in the two ancient capitals – one opened in Nara (1895, Teikoku Nara Hakubutsukan [帝国奈良博物館]) and the other in Kyoto (1897, Teikoku Kyoto Hakubutsukan [帝国京都博物館]).

[4] The works by the Committee members have been exempted from the judgement since the first exhibition (art. 20, "Moubusho Kokuji", 172 [1907]:「文部省告示 172 号:美術展覧会規定」第 20 条, quoted in Nittenshi Hensan Iinkai 1980, 545). The other exemptions were added in the next year (art. 3, "Monbisho Kokuji", 55 [1908]:「文部省告示 55 号」第三条, quoted in Nittenshi Hensan Iinkai 1980, 549).

winners every year. What kind of pre-modern classics were available as the basis of the Bunten classics?

By the turn of the century, the pre-modern works of art had already been reorganised to form Japanese art classics according to a classificatory mode distinguished from the ones commonly applied to those objects before Meiji. The most established mode of classification of art objects in pre-modern Japan was structured in relation to the tea ceremony (*sadolchado* [茶道]).[5] Its peculiar aesthetics had developed a certain system which made it possible to make value judgements on the utensils and decorative objects developed for the use of the highly-stylised ceremony since the late fifteenth century, and thus a certain canon of classics had been established. However, those pre-modern classics were progressively historicised in the current of modernism, westernism, and ultranationalism during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Historical perspectives, as I discussed in the context of the *episteme* which has been predominant in the Western society since the nineteenth century, were introduced to Japan in its contact with Western culture after the Meiji period. Several comprehensive catalogues of antiques had already been compiled, including *Kuntaikansochoki* (『君台観左右帳記』, c. 1470; the original version was expanded in the early sixteenth century),[6] one of the earliest and most influential guides to

---

[5] For a detailed account of the aesthetic tradition associated with tea ceremony in Japan, see Guth 1993; Kumakura 1995.

[6] *Kuntaikansochoki* was compiled by professional connoisseurs (*kaishodohoshu* [会所同朋衆]) appointed by the Ashikaga shoguns in the fifteenth century. It consisted of three parts: the first part listing and evaluating paintings by more than a hundred-and-fifty Chinese artists, the second part suggesting how to appreciate and display these articles in the alcove (*tokonoma* [床の間]) which is the only space in which objects should be exhibited in the tea room, and the third devoted to the similar classification and ranking of Chinese tea utensils and ornaments. Another influential catalogue which was also compiled during the Ashikaga shogunate was

evaluating and displaying paintings and other objects for tea ceremonies, and *Shukojusshu* (『集古十種』, c. 1800)[7] which represented a pre-modern attempt to catalogue a wide range of antiques. These catalogues had set up a body of certain classical works of painting, calligraphy, and other art forms, but none of them accorded with the historical mode of classification indicating artists, dates, their works and nationalities in the chronological framework of the evolutionary progress of human creativity.

Nonetheless, historical perspectives were rapidly acquired by Meiji contemporaries through various forms of knowledge, associated with Foucault's modern *episteme*, including biology, philology, economics, and art history. In the second decade of the Meiji era (late 1870s–late 80s), the "theory of evolution" was introduced and became prevalent (Sato 1996, 26).[8] It was also in the 1880s that a comprehensive survey of treasures kept in temples and shrines all over the country was launched by the Imperial Household Agency and the Tokyo Imperial Museum (Takagi 1999, 13–14). There were two major official surveys in this decade – one in 1884 and the other in 1886 (Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku Hyakunen-shi Hensan Iinkai and Geijutsu Kenkyu Shinko Zaidan 1987, 48–51, 71–73). A series of researches conducted for this survey succeeded in demystifying Buddha and other

---

Okazariki (*Muromachidono Gyoko Okazariki* 『室町殿行幸御飾記』), which offered a remarkably detailed record of the displays of paintings and other objects when Emperor Hanazono (花園天皇, 1397–1448) visited to the palace of the sixth Ashikaga shogun, Yoshinori (義教, 1394–1441), in 1437.

[7] *Shukojusshu* was compiled by scholars taking orders from Matsudaira Sadanobu (松平定信, 1758–1829), one of the most influential political figures at the time. As its title suggested, this illustrated catalogue consisted of ten categories (*jusshu*) of antiques including painting and calligraphy, arms, musical instruments, and stationery.

[8] The Japanese term for "the theory of evolution" ("*shinkaron*" 「進化論」) was invented in the 1880s as a translation for the English term by an eminent scholar and bureaucrat, Kato Hiroyuki (加藤弘之, 1836–1916).

treasures which had been hidden away from the public eye for centuries and classified them as art objects according to date, origin, and artist (see 4.3). The Tokyo Art College (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakko [東京美術学校], 1889) was also involved deeply in the historicisation of art objects. Its first president, Okakura Tenshin (岡倉天心, 1863–1913), was also the Head of Fine Art in the Imperial Museum, one of the first to be engaged in the treasure survey programme with Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) who also taught at the college, and a principal member of the editorial committee for the first publication on Japanese art history. Under the initiative of those historically-minded leaders, the college promoted historical perspectives on antiques in order to utilise them for the contemporary art production of its students. A comprehensive history of Japanese art was offered in a course of lectures by Okakura from 1890, and the historical subjects on specific categories of art (such as architecture, metal works, and lacquer wares) were started one after another (Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku Hyakunten-shi Hensan Iinkai and Geijutsu Kenkyu Shinko Zaidan 1987, 496–97). Finally, the first Japanese art history compiled by Japanese officials and scholars was published as *Histoire de l'art du Japon* (1900), written in French for the occasion of the Exposition Universalle in Paris, which was followed by its Japanese version published in the next year (*Kohon Nihon Teikoku Bijutsu Ryakushi*『稿本日本帝国美術略史』).[9] By the opening of the Bunten in 1907, historical perspectives had already been applied to Japanese antiques and their "classics" had already been materialised to a considerable extent in the lecture

---

[9] According to Mabuchi (1999, 47–48), two Japanese translations of Western publications on a complete history of Japanese art were available in Japan before *Histoire de l'art du Japon*. One was *L'Art Japonais* (1883) by Louis Gonse, a French art critic who had never visited Japan, and the other was *The Pictorial Arts of Japan* (1886) by William Anderson, a medical doctor who had stayed in the country for six years since 1873.

theatres of the Tokyo Art College, in the galleries of the Imperial Museums, and in the pages of the first published work of art history.

The works recognised as new classics by the Bunten were expected to continue the historical sequence established by those institutions concerning pre-modern Japanese art. This was certainly one of the most important points made by those who campaigned for the establishment of the new national museum of modern art. Their movement which involved government, artists, and mass media culminated in 1911 – a few years after the opening of the Bunten. The recommendation submitted to the House of Representatives (*shugi'in* [衆議院]) in March 1911 clearly shows that the presenters regarded the museum as a historical sphere:

> Paintings and sculptures of contemporary great masters are accumulating. However, how could they attract the attention of many without any place to display them systematically and historically. [Kumamoto 1957 (*Gendai no me* 35)]

Prior to the launch of the Bunten, moreover, several attempts had already been made to create contemporary classics according to historical perspectives through public exhibitions. The Kangakai (鑑画会, 1884–88), the Kan Kobijutsu Kai (観古美術会, 1880–87), and the Bijutsu Tenrankai (美術展覧会, 1888–) had two separate sections for the displays of antiques and contemporary works respectively at one event. In the former section, works from the past were selected and lined up to form classics of Japanese art; in the latter, contemporary works were chosen and awarded in reference to the classical models of the antique section to further the historical development of Japanese art.[10] However, it was evident that the Bunten did not function to historicise contemporary works of art based on the pre-modern

---

[10] See Furuta 1996, 44; Kitazawa 1989, 269–70, 279; Kumamoto 1957 [*Gendai no me* 27]; Shiina 1989, 206–12; Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku Hyakunen-shi Hensan Iinkai and Geijutsu Kenkyu Shinko Zaidan 1987, 22–24, 29–30.

classics that had been successfully historicised. The plan to establish a collection-based national museum of modern/contemporary art reached to the point that it was incorporated in the national budget of the Ministry of Education for the year 1911; but it was abolished only after a few months (Kumamoto 1957 [*Gendai no me* 37]). Not until the post-war period were the works of Japanese modern art systematically examined, evaluated, and organised to form a general view of modern classics. The project of appointing canonical works of post-Meiji art was comprehensively pursued for the first time after World War II as the result of a programme of curators and art critics, which were both new professions of the time, to historicise modern Japanese art (see Chapter 6). In its selection and judgement on contemporary works, the Bunten did not insist on the historical mode of classification any more than on the pre-modern aesthetics of the tea ceremony or the religious worship of Buddha.

From the very beginning, the Japanese Salon lacked a strong sense of commitment to promote or protect any particular artistic tradition through its system of producing new classics. The early European Academies and their exhibitions were decisively engaged in the particular tastes of the contemporary privileged classes represented by the preference for history painting, but the Bunten had no equivalent for the "noble genre" in Europe. This indecisiveness was most evident in the fact that the Bunten, as an institution, showed no coherent preference among the dozens of art groups which composed the official exhibition. In the early twentieth century, these groups of artists with various and often contradictory artistic skills and beliefs were most typically divided into two parties – the Old and the New Schools (Kyuha [旧派] and Shinpa [新派]) – in the class of Japanese-style painting (see 4.3). The first exhibition was inclined toward the

New School because the hanging committee was occupied by New School artists and experts, which caused a boycott by Old School painters; and the second exhibition shifted its favouritism to the Old School, and the New School artists boycotted it. In the third year, those two schools were persuaded to participate in the exhibition together for the first time. Then, from the sixth year, the class of Japanese-style painting was divided into two sections, each of which was organised by its own hanging committee and was judged separately.

In addition to its ambiguous orientation in taste, the Bunten was not equipped with any institutionalised means of training artists and educating art lovers other than the exhibition. It was not organised by an "academy" as such; it was directly sponsored by the Ministry of Education and run by the hanging committee whose members were selected every year by the Ministry. The Japan Academy of Art (Nihon Bijutsu In [日本美術院]) established by Okakura and his followers in 1898 was merely one of the groups of artists which were later included in the official exhibition and by no means an equivalent to the official bodies founded in France and Britain. This Japanese "Academy" represented the New School of the Bunten's Japanese-style painting. The Imperial Household Agency appointed courtly artists in three categories including painting, sculpture, and craft in 1890, but those artists titled "artists for the Imperial Household" ("*teishitsu gigei-in*" 「帝室技芸員」) did not directly sponsor the Japanese Salon. They mainly consisted of those who belonged to the Old School; and, despite their Imperial connection, Old School artists in the Bunten did not automatically enjoy a privileged position in the hanging committee over the others including the New School artists. The Tokyo Art College was no doubt the most authoritative institution for training young talents established by the Ministry of Education, but it did not compose a part of

the Bunten's system of producing new classics as explicitly as its European counterparts. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the College was dominated by the Old School Japanese-style painters and the New School European-style painters. However, the Bunten, containing both the old and the new, was not essentially biased to those schools, and therefore the College did not necessarily function to authorise and promote the "official taste" represented by the exhibition. Unlike the European Academies, the Bunten itself was not directly involved in any particular educational programme such as lectures or workshops; the large-scale annual exhibition was the only event its hanging committee organised.

Thus, the Japanese Salon neither decisively assimilated with any particular aesthetic and political framework to integrate its winning works into new classics, nor did it systematically consolidate its connection to any particular institution for the training of artists and the enlightenment of the public in order to disseminate its "official tastes" effectively. I have no intention of arguing that the Bunten was simply "neutral" and did not represent any particular tendencies at all at any time. On the contrary, as critics and artists complained in the 1910s, the official exhibition developed certain styles and tastes characteristic of its own (see 4.3). However, it was not achieved via the Bunten's system of designating new classical works. These decisions depended on a distinct set of politics which were associated with the state of instability and ambiguity where the inclination and preference of the official exhibition were made insecure and changeable, the conditions which allowed the art groups to manipulate this vulnerability, and the subsequent development of the Bunten not as a system to create new classics based on progressively-historicised pre-modern classics but as a sphere associated with a

particular power structure of the art groups.

In the next two sections, I discuss two elements, related to two institutions specific to modern Japan, which materialised these particular circumstances of the Bunten. One concerns a split between an old form of art and a new form of art which was brought about by the process of the institutionalisation of art (*bijutsu*) and consolidated by the launch of the Bunten. Because of the rapid and drastic transculturation having taken place in the late nineteenth century, the kind of art the Bunten dealt with, as was represented by its three classes of exhibits (Japanese-style painting, Western-style painting, and sculpture), turned out to be considerably different from the kind of art reclassified from a historical perspective and housed in the Imperial Museums in Tokyo, Nara, and Kyoto. In other words, the distinction between the old and the new forms of art did not allow the contemporary works in the Bunten to be evaluated according to the classics of Japanese antiques in the museums. Although the classics of Japanese art had already been established, the Bunten was not capable of making judgements founded on a corpus of works that had been explicitly historicised. The second element is the characteristics associated with the *iemoto* system which were developed by the early form of art groups. The Bunten was an attempt to solve the current problematics associated with a number of conflicting *iemoto* masters and their disciples in the world of art and to unite those artists under a national flag. However, the power of *iemoto* masters remained persistent in the new institution; and this new institution, originally from France, was constructed in a distinctive form in the course of its interactions with the *iemoto* system.

4.3. The "New Art" of the Bunten Exhibition

The Bunten consisted of three classes of art – Japanese-style painting, Western-style painting, and sculpture. They would seem totally natural and apparent according to our knowledge of the category of *bijutsu* today. However, at the dawn of the twentieth century, they had all just come into existence in the course of transculturation in modern Japan. They were all new kinds of art which formed the category of "new art" in contrast to the traditional forms of Japanese art which had developed before the Meiji era. By the establishment of the three genres of the Bunten, the world of *bijutsu* was divided into two forms; one of the traditional arts including calligraphy and various kinds of crafts, and the other of the contemporary arts included by the official exhibition. Of course, the art of painting was not restricted to the modern age, and certain kinds of sculpture had long flourished in the form of Buddha or *netsuke* (根付) before Meiji. However, Japanese-style painting in the Bunten was not identified with the Japanese painting of the samurai regime, and the category of "sculpture" consisted of the statuary of both Japanese and Western styles, which was distinguished from various pre-modern forms of three-dimensional works. As for Western-style painting, i.e. not exclusively but especially oil painting, it had never been a part of Japanese arts until the Meiji era. It had never been introduced on a large scale because of the extremely restricted opportunity for contact with any kind of Western culture under the rigid isolation policy successfully adopted by samurai governments for more than two centuries.

The process through which these new genres developed and were established in Meiji Japan may be considered in terms of the process of "autonomisation" or "purification" in Bourdieu's term. In his *The Rules of Art* (Bourdieu 1996),

Bourdieu discusses how the fields of cultural production and consumption acquired their greater "autonomy" in nineteenth century Europe. He includes "a process of differentiation of the modes of artistic expression" as a process of purification in the establishment of these cultural fields (138). He maintains:

> Claiming the autonomy of the properly 'iconic' representation, as it will later be called, in relation to verbal enunciation, painters abandon literature – meaning the 'motif', the 'anecdote', anything that may evoke an intention to reproduce and to represent, in short, to *say* – holding that the painting should obey its own specifically pictorial laws, and be independent of the object represented. [ibid.]

However, as we will see, the Japanese case unfolds a more complex, ambivalent process of the autonomisation/purification associated with the transculturation between the Western concept of art and the socio-cultural conditions and the agencies of the *bijutsu* field which were specific to Meiji Japan.

Before discussing the formation of the new art in detail, I clarify a particular condition which was influential in the orientation of cultural administration over the few decades before the opening of the Bunten in 1907. It is interestingly described by two contradictory terms – "westernism" and "ultranationalism". I have already argued that the Bunten should be regarded as constituting a process of "transculturation" rather than a result of "westernisation" and "modernisation". The official exhibition does not represent the erosion or loss of Japanese culture because of the introduction of the system belonging to the dominant Western culture; it proves, rather, to be a case of the "japanisation" of the Western system. To develop this point further, the condition that created the Bunten exhibition was the peculiar interaction between "westernism" and "ultranationalism" aiming at the establishment of the centralised nation-state under the Emperor. The Meiji period began with its drastic "westernisation and modernisation policy" involving an

extensive range of social and cultural transformations from the promotion of Western hairstyles to the reconstruction of samurai feudalism according to the Western model of nation-state. This extreme tendency toward "westernism" did not spare the field of art. On one hand, Western-style arts were promoted with a special emphasis on their practicality in industry. For example, the first "official" educational institution in Japan, the Kobu School of Art (Kobu Bijutsu Gakko [工部美術学校], 1876–83), belonging to the Ministry of Industry (Kobu-sho [工部省]), taught only Western-style arts (painting, sculpture, architecture), and all the teachers there were invited from Italy. As a consequence, throughout the late 1870s and 80s, Western-style arts – especially oil paintings – became very popular among the urban population, and a variety of shops and galleries were established to exhibit works for sale and to sell the tools and materials essential for the practice of Western-style arts. On the other hand, Japanese-style arts were accordingly neglected. For example, traditional Japanese-style painting was dying except for the Nanga School (南画).[11] The Kano School (Kano Ha [狩野派]) which had enjoyed a continuous patronage of the shogun palace since the sixteenth century declined dramatically since it lost its patron class on the collapse of the samurai government in the late nineteenth century.[12] A government official looked back upon those days and said:

---

[11] To be more precise, it was not the Nanga School as a whole but one of its divisions called *Bunjin-ga* (文人画).

[12] See Kurahashi and Otsuka 1997, 234.

> The miserable situation in which arts and crafts found themselves was beyond our imagination. The time was full of Western air; people said, "You are not a man if you don't sit on a chair", "It won't do if it is not from the West", and "Anything Japanese is absolutely worthless". Nobody could do anything about this intoxication with the West. [Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku Hyakunen-shi Hensan Iinkai and Geijutsu Kenkyu Shinko Zaidan 1987, 21][13]

The inclination toward "ultranationalism" which became dominant in the art world during the 1880s is usually regarded as a reaction against the extreme westernisation policy of the Meiji government. In fact, it was in this tendency of "ultranationalism" that a series of projects for the institutionalisation of art were accomplished. In this decade, three major exhibitions which were virtually ran by nationalist bureaucrats focused exclusively on Japanese arts. The Tokyo Art College, whose founders were closely related to one of the nationalist exhibitions, was established in 1887 without any department to teach Western-style arts. However, the development of those institutions and subsequent projects of the same kind cannot be fully understood in the dichotomy of "westernism" and "ultranationalism". Although this nationalist tendency in the 80s became increasingly influential in the orientation of not only the art world but also the whole society over the next half a century, the successive institutions of art including the Bunten should be considered in the framework of the eclecticism of both "westernism" and "ultranationalism". This framework is significant particularly in my discussion of the formation of the new categories of art in this section.

The category of Japanese-style painting was based on a complex situation where the modes of classification that had been applied commonly in Japanese art were repudiated and the modern-Western conception of art was introduced in the

---

[13] This is a statement of Kawase Hideharu (河瀬秀治), quoted from "Bijutsukai no

context of the eclectic programmes of "westernism" and "ultranationalism". First of all, the category of "painting" ("*kaiga*"「絵画」) itself was produced in this process to replace the traditional category which included both "calligraphy and painting" ("*shoga*"「書画」). This combined category indicates that the distinction between "calligraphy and painting" was not clearly recognised; it was a common practice to mix pictures and calligraphy in a single work. The first Domestic Industrial Exposition (Naikoku Kangyo Hakurankai [内国勧業博覧会], 1877) followed this traditional method in classifying its exhibits; "calligraphy and painting" was found in one of the six classes which divided the category of "fine art" ("*bijustsu*") housed in the first building called "Fine Art Museum" ("Bijutsukan"「美術館」) in Japan. In addition to calligraphy, this class included what would be now classified as "arts and crafts" rather than "painting".

Class 2 *Shoga* [Calligraphy and Painting]
(1) Calligraphy and paintings in ink, water-colours, slate pencils, chalks, squid ink, etc. on paper or canvas;
(2) Paintings in oil on canvas, wood, etc.;
(3) Woven images;
(4) Lacquer works, ironed pictures;
(5) Pottery, cloisonné and metal works [Kitazaawa 1989, 185]

The specific category of "painting" was established later by distinguishing itself from "calligraphy" and "arts and crafts". This process was overtly conscious of the mode of classification and its hierarchical order commonly practised in the West. A famous case of a series of controversies over calligraphy between Okakura Tenshin and a Western-style painter, Koyama Shotaro (小山正太郎, 1857–1916),[14] originated in the fact that calligraphy was not included in the category of fine art

---

konjaku", *Nihon Bijutsu* 80 (1904).

[14] This case is commonly called "'Sho wa bijutsu narazu' ronso" (「『書ハ美術ナラズ』論争」) because it was triggered by Koyama's criticism titled "Sho wa bijutsu narazu" ("Calligraphy is not bijutsu") in a journal, *Toyo Gakujutsu Zasshi* (『東洋学術雑誌』),

(*bijutsu*) in the West, and the separation of "industrial arts" from fine art also came to be commonly recognised in Meiji Japan mainly as Japan learned this Western dichotomy in the process of participating in the international expositions held in Europe and the U.S. (Kitazawa 1989, 297–98). Nonetheless, it must be noted that these Western distinctions were progressively materialised through the various institutions which were expected to function as tools of "ultranationalism" from the 1880s. The earliest and most notable example is the Domestic Competitive Exhibition for Paintings (*Naikoku Kaiga Kyoshinkai* [内国絵画共進会]) held in 1882 and 1884.[15] The *Kyoshinkai* was contradictory in that it excluded calligraphy, arts and crafts, and traditional forms of mounting (such as scrolls and screens) while its "ultranationalist" tendency rejected any kind of Western-style painting. The category of Japanese-style painting, distinguished from the traditional forms of Japanese arts and from its Western counterpart, became a standard of the Bunten exhibition.

In comparison with the pre-Meiji situation, I discuss two points which characterised the new form of Japanese painting. Firstly, in terms of aestheticism, the dominant mode of displaying and evaluating paintings and other works of art was one related to the tea ceremony which had been practised among *shoguns* and other social elites since the fifteenth century (see 4.2). Especially since Sen-no Rikyu (千利休, 1522 – 91) perfected its philosophy, rituals, and aesthetics, a number of art works including hanging scrolls, lacquer works, and pottery were produced, appreciated, displayed, evaluated, and collected for the limited space of the alcove of the small tea room. The alcove was usually large enough to hang only one scroll of

---

in May 1882. For details of this controversy, see Kitazawa 1989, 258–63.

[15] Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku Hyakunen-shi Hensan Iinkai and Geijutsu Kenkyu

painting (and one was not supposed to hang more than two) and all the decorations and utensils were expected to materialise harmonious tranquillity. As was discussed in the last section, this tradition had already established its longstanding orthodoxies, according to which antiques and contemporary works were evaluated and classified, by the nineteenth century. However, Japanese-style painting was established by excluding the two most prevalent ways of mounting and framing paintings in the tea ceremony – hanging scrolls and various forms of three-dimensional crafts. Moreover, it was no longer produced for nor appreciated in the harmonious tea room. It was destined to be displayed at a particular environment of competitive art exhibition in the Western-style building. As a consequence, the new form of Japanese-style painting developed into what was sarcastically called "exhibitionary art" ("*tenrankai geijutsu*" 「展覧会芸術」) – works of art produced especially for the new exhibitionary space.[16] In 1908, a journal article commented:

> This [the art exhibition] has become the only place for artists to compete with one another. This fact naturally led to the birth of a certain style of painting which had never been seen before; it is the painting of the exhibition mode. . . . The exhibitions are usually held in the European-style buildings, and so paintings should match them. Therefore, the paintings for the exhibitions became larger in size and thicker in colour with higher contrasts and deeper perspectives. [Furuta 1996, 49][17]

Secondly, the establishment of the category of Japanese-style painting meant a dissolution of the *iemoto* system based on "schools" ("*ryuha*" 「流派」) and an integration of various "painting schools" ("*gaha*" 「画派」) in the name of

---

Shinko Zaidan 1987, 28.

[16] Also see Hoan 1926.

[17] This is a remark made by a Japanese-style painter, Kawai Gyokudo (川合玉堂, 1873 – 1957), quoted from "Tenrankai jidai", *Shoga kotto zasshi* April 1908 (「展覧会時代」『書画骨董雑誌』).

Japanese-style painting. It was not until the 1880s that the Japanese-style or Japanese painting ("*nihonga*"「日本画」) as a generic term for the paintings of all schools was disseminated among art experts – i.e. artists, officials, and critics. The *iemoto* system, common in a wide range of cultural fields involving learning/teaching of various skills, was based on the patriarchy which developed in relation to the feudalism of samurai government.[18] Each school was headed by the absolute master – the "*iemoto*", a direct descendant of the legitimate lineage which had inherited the artistic skills and orthodoxies of the school. The master took disciples, the most accomplished of whom were commonly licensed to teach their own disciples. One of the most typical examples of this system was the Kano School, the most influential painting school in pre-modern Japan. Since it was founded by Kano Masanobu (1434 – 1530 狩野正信), the school had prospered in its uninterrupted lineage of its family enjoying the continuous patronage of successive shoguns and feudal lords all over the country and successfully expanding its market to the lower-class public in cities (Sato 1996, 189). At the beginning of the Meiji period, the most obvious way to classify Japanese-style paintings was still to divide them into these schools. The exhibits for the *Kyoshinkai* in 1882 was classified into six categories according to schools; the last category was devoted to miscellanies, but as many as fourteen schools were named in other five categories. However, by the time the Bunten was established, those divisions by traditional school had become obsolete, and so had the particular set of artistic skills and styles each school represented. Although the chaotic situation of the sectionalised category of Japanese-style painting remained what concerned the Bunten officials

---

[18] A series of Nishiyama's works (1982a, b) give an extensive account of the historical development of the *iemoto* system.

was no longer the old school system but a new kind of group – the prototypes of "art groups" – which will be discussed in the next section. As it is commonly known, the *iemoto* system and a number of pre-modern schools still remain predominant in various forms of cultural practice in Japan, such as the tea ceremony, flower arrangement (Kado [華道]), Kabuki and Noh plays, Hocho (庖丁; ceremonial skills for using a cooking knife), Kodo (香道; the cult of incense burning), and Buddhism (Nishiyama 1982b). However, at least in the field of painting, the existing schools were progressively dissolved and replaced with trans-school art groups in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Western-style painting was a completely new category, established in the Meiji period, which had no precedent in the art world of pre-modern Japan. This is not to say that this was the first time that Western painting techniques were introduced; the most significant case may be the application of perspective drawing by Maruyama Okyo (円山応挙, 1733–95) and Odano Naotake (小田野直武, 1750–80) in the late eighteenth century. This Western technique became so popular both in Edo and Kyoto that Maruyama established his own painting school (Maruyama Ha [円山派]) while Odano's influence stimulated the subsequent boom of Western tastes in arts and learning over the turn of the century.[19] However, neither introduced a full range of Western painting concepts and skills systematically because of the peculiar circumstances of the national seclusion which extremely restricted access to anything from the West. It was merely a reflection of the influence of "Western tastes" on the Japanese painting. In fact, the Maruyama School was regarded as a school of Japanese-style painting; the *Kyoshinkai* included it in the fourteen

---

[19] See Tsuji 1991, 141–44. Also see Lee 1977 for the detailed discussion of the application of Western techniques into Japanese prints in the same period.

existing schools it raised in its six categories. Then, when the Meiji audience encountered unfamiliar art from the West, they were completely at a loss since they lacked any reference in their intellectual and daily life that would enable them to "appreciate" it. Establishing an independent category of Western-style painting parallel to the Japanese-style painting (however different it was from its pre-modern form) in the official exhibition was an epoch-making event, which brought about a succession of twists and turns over four decades.

The best way to reveal the difficulties faced by both Western-style painting and the Meiji audience would be to see how the oil painting – the most prevalent and popular form among the imported techniques – was first accepted by a subcultural channel which was familiar to contemporary audiences – "shows and fairs". Kinoshita Naoyuki (1993) gives an extensive account of "shows" ("*misemono*" 「見世物」) in the late Edo period and the beginning of Meiji and describes how oil paintings were displayed there. In 1874, an oil painting show, "The Techniques of European Paintings" ("Seyogako" 「西洋画工」) was held in Asakusa (浅草) – the most popular entertainment district developed around a famous temple in Tokyo – by Goseda Horyu (五姓田芳柳, 1827–92) and his disciples (ibid., 130–31). Horyu held the same kind of show in the following year, too. About the same time (c.1875), a group of Western-style painters including Takahashi Yuichi (高橋由一, 1828–94) exhibited their oil paintings in a show booth in Ginza (銀座), another popular pleasure quarter in Tokyo (ibid., 135). Those events, both accompanied by the performances and eloquence of orators, attracted a large audience interested in curiosities. Moreover, oil painting was also displayed in the "tea houses" ("*chaya*" or "*chamise*" 「茶屋」), where the customers could drink coffee which had just been introduced to Japan as they admired paintings from the

West (ibid., 141–44). Although they were explicitly modelled on Western-style cafés which served exotic drink, coffee, and they were certainly a novelty to the public in those days, this style of commercial establishment itself was by no means original to the modern era. In the late eighteenth century, a particular kind of tea house developed in the urban areas; the exhibitions of the rare and curious – for example, deer, peacock, and freaks – added to the attraction of their customers savouring the Japanese tea (ibid., 144–45). The oil painting café was a mere modification of this pre-Meiji entertainment. Either in the show booths or in the cafés, oil painting was regarded as a "curiosity" for its realistic representation by the Meiji public who had only known highly-stylised Japanese paintings or two-dimensional ukiyoe. As Kinoshita maintains by quoting from contemporary sources, the audience unanimously expressed their admiration saying, "It looks as if it's going to move", "It looks as if it's going to speak", or "It can't be a genuine painting; the clothes should be real" (ibid., 130, 135).

Recent researches have offered detailed discussions of how Western-style painting shrugged off its subcultural dubiety to be accepted officially and unofficially as a form of "art" ("*bijutsu*") objects.[20] This process was complex and problematic. While oil paintings attracted public attention in the entertainment quarters in Tokyo, Japanese elite "modernisers" were learning Western painting techniques under the proper guidance of Italian artists at the first national art school, the Kobu School of Art. The mid-1870s was also the beginning of a decade when Western-style painting became increasingly popular among the urban middle-class (Takeda 1969, 13) and at the same time increasingly oppressed

---

[20] These researches include Furuta 1996, Kitazawa 1989, and Shimada 1994; also see Takeda 1969, and Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku Hyakunen-shi Hensan Iinkai and

because of prevailing "ultranationalism". The closure of the Kobu School (1883) was only one of many incidents to indicate the increasing dominance of the nationalist tendency. Official exhibitions excluded Western-style painting to focus on the promotion of Japanese-style counterpart, and the Tokyo Art College was founded without Western-style arts (1887). In 1889, Western-style artists formed the Meiji Bijutsu Kai (明治美術会) to protest against the nationalist current. However, at the turn of the century, Western-style arts gradually regained official recognition. In 1896, the Tokyo Art College added a department of Western-style painting, and the Bunten in 1907 included Western-style painting as one of its three categories of art.

The category of sculpture in the Bunten was not restricted to "Western-style" sculpture made of plaster, bronze or marble. No rule stated the exclusion of traditional Japanese techniques of wooden sculpture or ivory work, and the choice of the judges for the first exhibition reflected a well-balanced "ideal" mixture of Western and Japanese styles (Nakamura 1991, 60). However, the distinction between those styles was quite ambiguous compared to the distinction explicitly made in the field of painting. In the Bunten exhibition, three-dimensional works of art of two different styles – Japanese and Western – were both classed in a single category of sculpture while two-dimensional works were allowed separate categories according to geographical origin. This ambiguous disposition of sculpture was associated with the ambiguity and novelty of the category of sculpture itself. In fact, the Japanese word for "sculpture" – "*chokoku*" (「彫刻」) did not acquire the current meaning as a category of art parallel to painting until the late nineteenth century (Kinoshita 1993, 32–34). When this category of art was introduced to

---

Geijutsu Kenkyu Shinko Zaidan 1987.

Meiji Japan, it was met by total confusion and bewilderment, which persisted for a long time. This (essentially Western) concept of sculpture by no means included all kinds of three-dimensional creative works; it was positively differentiated from "others" in its materials, subject matters, styles, and monumental significance. In the late nineteenth century, it meant a life-size or larger figure of the whole or a part of the human body, made of plaster, bronze, or marble, realistically sculpted but exposing the original materials, which was usually placed on some kind of platform and often displayed in a secular environment of a public space such as a park, a square, or a public building. None of the existing artistic creations in Japan contained these elements sufficiently to be identified as sculpture. The early-Meiji public had "no sensibility or term to accept that the life-size figure was a sculpture and a work of art", Kinoshita (1993, 22) states, "and there was no place to display and appreciate it". The poor recognition of sculpture as a form of art in the early Meiji was evident in an episode on the opening of the Kobu School (1876). When the first official school specialising in Western arts recruited its first students, only the department of sculpture failed to attract enough students. It was due to a lack of understanding of what sculpture was, and the officials barely managed to fill up the vacancies even with the attraction of an exemption from school fees (ibid., 21).

Sculpture thus found itself in a situation quite similar to the one in which the Western-style painting had found itself at the beginning of Meiji. It migrated to a foreign society where almost nobody had the cultural knowledge to allow him/her to "understand" or "appreciate" its values which it enjoyed in the society it came from. The reception of (Western-style) sculpture was then mediated through the same subcultural channel as the oil painting – the street show in the entertainment

quarter. Like Western-style painting, this Western "curiosity" made the first appearance in Tokyo by merging into certain skills which had already been practised in the show world. Those existing skills were related to a variety of "*saiku* shows" ("*saiku misemono*"「細工見世物」), in which artisans competed in their craftsmanship to make animals, historical figures, imaginary creatures, and Buddha, etc. out of various materials including basketry, shells, pottery, straws, and glass (ibid., 58–62). The *saiku* shows had gained a tremendous popularity in the capital city (Edo, now called Tokyo) since the early 1820s and remained popular over the end of the samurai regime and the beginning of the modern era. Western-style sculptures were displayed at a show booth in Tokyo as a part of a composite exhibition of those *saiku* shows in 1875. The "sculptor" was Nezumiya Denkichi (鼠屋伝吉, ?–1875), and the title of his show was "Stone Statues in the Paradise" ("Sekizo Rakuho"「石像楽圃」). The show reproduced a scene of the streets in a European city, where the stone images of a couple in European clothes under a European-style umbrella, a gentleman with a European cap on a bicycle, a child running with a balloon in his hand, etc. were located on plinths commonly used for European-style sculptures (ibid., 16–18). Denkichi's inspiration was evidently based on his visit to Vienna in 1873; he materialised what he saw in his European tour – streets full of "sculptures" – in the streets of Tokyo. This was not the first time that Western-style sculptures had been displayed in public; two official expositions before and after the Vienna World Exposition (1872, 1874) both contained several works identified as European-style sculptures including a life-size plaster figure of the Emperor of Austria (ibid., 23–24). Nonetheless, as in the case of the oil painting, Denkichi's show proved that sculptures were still regarded as "curiosities"; and moreover that those human figures standing in an outdoor, public

space were certainly considered as a curious phenomenon. Japan had no tradition of decorating its cities and towns with monumental statues of royalty, politicians, soldiers, or artists. It was not until 1893 that the first open-air sculpture of a human figure was erected.[21]

In such circumstances, the category of sculpture was created through the process of importing the European conception of sculpture and also identifying sculptural works from the artefacts made by Japanese artistic tradition. The fine art exhibition at the first Domestic Industrial Exposition (1877), which I discussed above in relation to the category of Japanese painting, consisted of a class of "Sculptures", which included wardrobes, cupboards, vases, sword racks, pipes, seals, *netsuke*, and the figures of Buddha and historical figures (Tokyo Geijustu Daigaku Hyakunen-shi Hensan Iinkai and Geijutsu Kenkyu Shinko Zaidan 1987, 21). This chaotic situation had to be cleared in order to establish the category of sculpture as it is conceived today in relation to its Western definition. I discuss two examples which reveal this process most explicitly. The first concerns how the statues of Buddha came to be recognised as one of the typical works of sculpture made in pre-modern Japan. Old and fine statues of Buddha had long been treasured, and by the eighteenth century they had been displayed at a touring exhibition, *de-gaicho* (出開帳), which was held in the temples in large cities.[22] Nonetheless,

---

[21] This statue of Omura Masujiro (大村益次郎, 1824–69), founder of the modern military system in the last days of the Tokugawa shogunate, still stands in the Yasukuni Shrine (靖国神社) in Tokyo. It was made by Okuma Ujiniro (大熊氏広, 1856–1934) who was one of the first generations of Japanese Western-style sculptors having learned under an Italian artist, Vincenzo Ragusa (1841–1927), at the Kobu School of Art. See Nakamura 1991, 108–12.

[22] Regarding the details of the *kaicho* (開帳) which includes the *i-kaicho* (居開帳) and the *de-gaicho* (出開帳), see Hiruma 1973. *Kaicho* originally meant that Buddhist temples displayed their miraculous Buddha sculptures and paintings which were usually kept with a great care in their warehouses. Its origin could be

the Buddha was always an object of religious worship; even in the highly popularised situation of the *de-gaicho*, people made offerings and prayed for divine favour. The statues of Buddha were progressively secularised through a series of official research projects of the Meiji period including the comprehensive survey of religious treasures in the 1880s and the historicisation programme involving the Imperial Museum and the Tokyo Art College (see 4.2). In *Histoire de l'art du Japon* (1900), the category of "sculpture" was mainly occupied by Buddha figures from all over Japan, which were ordered chronologically as pre-modern classics of Japanese sculpture. The other important factor for the differentiation of the category of sculpture from pre-modern objects was to make a distinction between sculpture and craft. From the list of objects contained in the class of sculpture of the Domestic Industrial Expositions (Naikoku Kangyo Hakurankai [内国勧業博覧会]),[23] furniture, vases, and accessories were classified separately as "arts and

---

traced back to as early as the Heian era (794–1192), but it was throughout the mid-Edo period and the beginning of Meiji (eighteenth – late nineteenth centuries) that this form of exhibition became extremely popular. The *kaicho* consisted of two kinds; the *i-kaicho* (居開帳) which was held in the temple's own premises and the *de-gaicho* (出開帳) which took place in the temples in large cities such as Tokyo (then called Edo), Kyoto, and Osaka to which the treasures travelled a long way from all over Japan. The latter especially flourished during the Edo period; according to Hiruma (1973), more than 1,500 events have been recorded even only in the city of Edo. The exhibitions were held essentially to allow the populace to worship the religious images, but more and more of them aimed at collecting donations for the repair and maintenance of the temples. They also became popularised, accompanied by show tents, theatres, cafés, and street performers, and they started to display the secular treasures belonging to local nobility or donated by their supporters including furniture, musical instruments, craftwork, painting scrolls and calligraphy. These pleasure quarters around the *kaicho* temples attracted more and more people than the religious treasures themselves and developed into independent entertainment districts. However, the number of the *kaicho* gradually decreased after it culminated in the late eighteenth century/the early nineteenth century, then finally the Shintoism purification policy (*haibutsu kishaku* [廃仏毀釈]) and the westernisation and Modernisation policy (*bunmei kaika* [文明開化]) of the Meiji government accelerated its decline.

[23] The Domestic Industrial Expositions typically represented the westernisation

industry" ("*bijutsu kogyo*"「美術工業」) from the Third Exposition (1890).[24] Various skills of producing three-dimensional objects had already developed in pre-modern Japan, including those of "*saiku*" using different materials, and those antiques and contemporary works which represented Japanese art at the international expositions in Europe and the United States since the mid-nineteenth century. Those works were positively divided into sculptures and crafts according to the distinction commonly made in the West.

Although the making of "sculpture" thus involved the re-invention of the category of fine art according to the Western conception, it by no means succeeded in materialising the Western category exactly as it was. The process revealed a case of intensive transculturation which involved constant conflicts and negotiations between the Western conception and the Japanese tradition. This tendency was emphasised especially in contemporary works of sculpture, because the Japanese style and the Western style were not distinguished as explicitly as those in the field of painting. The Bunten had only one class for sculptural works containing various artistic tendencies of both the Japanese and the Western styles, while painting was divided into two classes. The definition of Japanese-style sculpture itself was considerably problematic. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, the most popular way to differentiate the Japanese style from

---

and modernisation policy of the Meiji governments. Five Expositions were held (1877, 1881, 1890, 1895, 1903); the first three were located at the Ueno Park in Tokyo, the fourth in Kyoto, and the fifth in Osaka. Closely related to the International Expositions in Europe and the U.S. in which Japan eagerly participated, these events introduced the latest technological inventions as well as arts and crafts from all over the world. See Yoshida 1970.

[24] The term, "*kogyo*", specifically means "industry" today, and "*kogei*"(工芸) which literally means "craft" is commonly used instead to indicate a category of art. However, in the late nineteenth century, the distinction between "*kogyo*" and "*kogei*" was not yet established, and those terms were interchangeable. See

the Western style was a definition by material. There were two materials which were progressively thought to characterise the Japanese-style sculpture in this period – ivory and wood. Ivory became very popular in view of its popularity in the West (Nakamura 1991, 23–26). Its boom was so extreme that it completely took over the sculpture section of the second Domestic Industrial Exposition (1881). The art of ivory works was directly borrowed from the pre-modern art of making *netsuke*, a miniature accessory made of ivory, and the artists created larger works by combining their skills developed in relation to *netsuke* making with the Western concept of ornamental sculpture. Wood was commonly used for Buddha statues. In 1889, the "nationalistic" Tokyo Art College started to teach students; its sculpture department was devoted entirely to wood carving. "Western-style" sculpture and the traditional Japanese works of metal, lacquer, ivory, and pottery were all excluded. The founding members of teaching staff included a sculptor who specialised in Buddhist images (*busshi* [仏師]), Takamura Koun (高村光雲, 1852–1934), who developed his skills under his master, Takamura Toun (高村東雲), in Tokyo.[25] Although the great boom of ivory works converted many wooden-sculptors to this more popular and profitable tradition, wood carving developed as a representative form of the Japanese-style sculpture in contrast to the Western-style counterpart. Despite those two main streams of Japanese-style sculptures developed in the late nineteenth century, their distinction from the Western style by material was not established as a standard practice. Wooden and ivory works represented only a small part of the Japanese tradition of

---

Kitazawa 1989, 186–87.

[25] The fact that the master and the disciple have similar names (sharing the same family name and one of the Chinese characters [*kanji*] in their given names in this case) indicates a common practise in the master-disciple relationship associated

three-dimensional works. In fact, the bronze figures which were classified into the Western style in the Meiji period were commonly used for the Buddha images during the Tempyo era (天平時代, 710–94).

The exhibits of the sculpture class at the first Bunten exhibition exemplified the unsettled situation of this new hybrid field of art. This section attracted only sixteen exhibits altogether. They were all plaster figures except one ivory work and one cast-copper statue despite the exhibition containing both Japanese-style and Western-style sculptors. The works of two prize winners were both plasters – the Western material introduced in the Meiji period, and one of the winners was a Japanese-style sculptor who was trained as wood-sculptor under Takamura Koun (Nakamura 1991, 60).

Thus the three categories of the Bunten exhibition represented the new forms of art, which had progressively developed since the introduction of the Western conceptions and practices of art after the Meiji period. The constitution of those categories revealed a problematic combination of the adoption of the Western system with Japanese cultural traditions redefined in the contemporary current of nationalism. The official recognition of those three genres of *bijutsu* essentially meant that the production of the new classics would be conducted according to the categories of Japanese-style painting, Western-style painting, and sculpture. This policy caused a split between the pre-modern forms of art and the new forms of art produced by the Bunten. As I discussed in the last section, pre-modern art forms were progressively historicised by various institutions and displayed as "classics" at the Imperial Museums. However, the modern forms of art as defined at the Bunten exhibition were not directly related to those pre-modern classics; therefore,

---

with the *iemoto* system and *not* their blood relations.

they could not continue to tell a "history" of Japanese art which had been started by the works of art exhibited in the galleries of the Imperial Museums. For the purposes of evaluating contemporary art, neither the tastes favoured by the pre-modern ruling class (e.g. the tea taste) nor the historicised antiques that had little reference to contemporary objects were of any use. These particular circumstances made it difficult for the curatorial authority of antiques to cross the border between the Meiji and the Edo periods. The split between the modern and the pre-modern arts did not allow any curatorial authority to be formed in the field of new art evolved in the Bunten exhibition. As a consequence, the Bunten did not develop the experts who would lead the hanging committee. Instead, the groups of artists inherent in the Bunten started to direct the judgement of the official exhibition. Those factions transformed the organisation and function of the official exhibition. For them, the Bunten was not a system to designate the contemporary classical works. Instead it was expected to enhance the power of the groups.

In Europe and North America, museums in general developed in various specialised fields associated with the "historical" *episteme* (See 3.5). The modern institutions became highly specialised in the course of their development from Renaissance assemblies of miscellaneous curiosities to be organised under such disciplines as art history (including antiques and modern art), archaeology, anthropology, and natural history; but these specialised fields all shared the same historical concern. In Japan, while the historicised antiques were associated with the Imperial Museums in the three largest cities,[26] other historical disciplines most typically developed in relation to the so-called "Educational Museums" ("Kyoiku

---

[26] Note that the collections of the Imperial Museums consisted of a great number of "natural products" ("*tensanbutsu*", "*tensan-shiryo*" 「天産物」 「天産資料」) until they

Hakubutsukan"「教育博物館」) which were established in Tokyo and other major cities after the early Meiji.[27] The national institution in Tokyo, the predecessor of the present National Science Museum (Kokuritsu Kagaku Hakubutsukan [国立科学博物館]), was founded under the Ministry of Education in 1877. Its collection, consisting of a wide range of natural and artificial products, focused on the materials of scientific concerns including zoological and botanical specimens, archaeological findings, minerals, medical equipment, and various machines and instruments for scientific and chemical experiments. I make two points here in relation to the development of the Museum as a historical space. One concerns its link with the development of archaeology and anthropology. Needless to say, these academic disciplines were parts of the Western elements which were introduced to Meiji Japan. The man who was responsible for it, Edward S. Morse (1838–1925), was closely related to the Museum (Shiina 1988, 117–28; 1989, 165–67). He made one of the earliest "archaeological" discoveries in Japan; he discovered the Omori Shell Mound (Omori Kaizuka [大森貝塚]) and conducted its exhaustive excavation and researches with his colleagues of the University of Tokyo. The discovery of the Omori Shell Mound was the beginning of the development of archaeological/anthropological concerns of Japanese history, and the findings there were acquired and displayed at the Educational Museum. The second point is the natural-historical orientation of the Educational Museum which became more explicit in the 1920s. This orientation is associated particularly with the views of the father of the Japanese museology – Tanahashi Genzaburo (棚橋源三郎). He directed the Social Education Building (Tsuzoku Kyoiku Kan [通俗教育館]) of the

---

were transferred to the Tokyo Educational Museum in 1925.

[27] See Shiina 1988 for details of the development of the Educational Museums.

Educational Museum, which focused on natural history in its collections, researches, and displays (Shiina 1988, 144–56). However, contemporary art, displayed at the Bunten and other art group exhibitions, did not develop as a part of this historical sphere.

4.4. The Art Groups and the *Iemoto* System

In this section, I discuss how the Bunten was assimilated to the particular power structure associated with the groups of artists included in this official exhibition. One of the principal incitements for establishing a composite official exhibition was to control the chaotic situation of the art world caused by a number of relatively minor groups of artists and connoisseurs conflicting with one another. This schismatic tendency was most evident in the Japanese-style painting which consisted of no less than twenty four groups. The conflict between the Old School (Kyuha [旧派])and the New School (Shinpa [新派]) which emerged in the late 1880s still continued between the Japan Association of Art (Nihon Bijutsu Kyokai [日本美術協会]) which represented the latter and the Japan Academy of Art (Nihon Bijutsu In [日本美術院]) representing the former, and at the turn of the century a number of "neutral" groups were formed, involving especially young artists from both parties.[28] In addition, the Nanga School which had long been neglected since its heyday at the beginning of the Meiji era revived in the 1890s. The Nanga artists gathered to form their own groups in three major cities in Japan (Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka), participated in the exhibitions organised by the Old School, and established their nation-wide association, the Japan Nanshuga Association (Nihon Nanshuga Kai [日本南宗画会]), just a year before the launch of the Bunten exhibition. The

Western-style painters also consisted of the conflicting schools of the "conservatives" and the "reformers". The oil painters had been united under the Meiji Art Association (Meiji Bijutsu Kai [明治美術会], 1889) to protest against the ultranationalistic current which positively rejected their works. However, the younger generations who were unsatisfied with the conservative styles of the association left it to form the Hakuba Group (Hakuba Kai [白馬会], literally means the "White Horse Group") in 1896, which led to an intense rivalry between the Old (Meiji) and the New (Hakuba) Schools in the Western-style painting. In 1902, the Meiji Art Association was split into two independent groups, the Pacific Painting Association (Taiheiyo Gakai [太平洋画会]) and the Tomoe Group (Tomoe Kai [巴会]).[29]

However, those groups could not be identified with the traditional "schools" ("*ryuha*"), such as the Kano School, the Sumiyoshi School (Sumiyoshi Ha [住吉派]), and the Tosa School (Tosa Ha [土佐派]). As I have discussed above, the category of Japanese-style painting was formed as a result of the official attempts to separate its practice from the pre-modern school system; and neither Western-style paintings nor sculptures had existed before. Therefore, the groups which shared the art world at the turn of the century were positively distinguished from those earlier schools; they were all established as new groups in the Meiji period. For example, neither the Old nor New School of the Japanese-style painting represented the traditional system of painting school in spite of its name. The Old School with a conservative and nationalist disposition insisted on classing its exhibits into

---

[28] See Kitazawa 2000, 56; Sato 1996, 197; Takeda 1969, 43–44.

[29] The Tomoe Group which included Goseda Horyu (see 4.3) and Kawamura Kiyo'o (川村清雄) died out in 1909 while the Pacifif Painting Association which has developed into the Pacific Art Association (Taiheiyo Bijutsukai [太平洋美術会])

conventional schools in one of its annual exhibitions,[30] but what was significant about the Old School was the fact that it successfully combined all those schools which had long been independent into one school. The competitive exhibition of painting held in 1886 managed to gather more than three hundred exhibits from various schools under the umbrella of the Old School.[31] It encouraged not the separation of the painting schools but their union in opposition to the new current in the Japanese-style painting. The New School always had a close relationship with the Kano School. Since Fenollosa (see 4.2) "discovered" Kano Hogai (狩野芳崖, 1828–88) at the Kyoshinkai exhibition in 1884, this particular painting school which had been the most influential until it lost its patron, the samurai class, in the course of modernisation played an important role in the New School. Nevertheless, for both Fenollosa and Okakura (see 4.2), it was the orthodox school of Japanese painting, whose skills and styles inspired their innovative programme of the new style. It was not their intention to recover the past prosperity of the lineage of the Kano School itself. In fact, the New School rejected the conventional school system more explicitly than its counterpart. It always criticised the Old School for its insistence on the pre-modern framework of the painting schools; both Fenollosa and

---

remains one of the most influential art groups today.

[30] The Old School consisted of two major groups, the Toyo Painting Group (東洋絵画会) and the Japan Association of Art (日本美術協会), which respectively held the annual Kyoshinkai painting exhibition (絵画共進会) and the biannual Bijutsu Tenrankai exhibition (美術展覧会). The former focused on Japanese-style painting, and the latter included a wider range of Japanese art – painting and calligraphy, sculpture, pottery, etc. It was the Kyoshinkai that classed its exhibits into painting schools.

[31] This was the first exhibition of the Toyo Painting Group which was established under the sponsorship of the Ryuchi Group (which became the Japan Association of Art in 1888) in 1884. See Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku Hyakunen-shi Hensan Iinkai and Geijutsu Kenkyu Shinko Zaidan 1987, 68–69.

Okakura made this point in their response to the Kyoshinkai exhibition in 1886.[32] Thus, by the time when the Bunten opened its first exhibition, it was not the traditional schools but those new groups that officials had to deal with.

This official exhibition materialised a centralised system of gathering various groups of artists and other art experts and evaluating the works they brought in. Unlike the Paris Salon, the Japanese counterpart was directly organised by the Ministry of Education. The Japan Academy of Art (the New School) was by no means an official body; it was merely one of the groups which participated in the exhibition. Instead, the Ministry explicitly established the system so that power would concentrate on itself on every level. For example, the hanging committee was inspected by the Minister of Education (Proclamation, no.220, art. 2),[33] and its important posts were occupied by the members of the Ministry (arts. 2 and 8). The prizes were awarded by the Minister (art. 28), who also decided the purchases of the government after consulting the committee members (art. 31). As for the official catalogues compiled for every exhibition, they were edited by the Ministry (Notification of the Ministry of Education, no. 174, art. 1), published by the company nominated by the Ministry (art. 2), and all their details had to be inspected by the Ministry (art. 6). Under this highly centralised system, strict judgement was made for exhibits, which obviously pleased an art historian, Saito Ryozo (斎藤隆三), in 1944:

---

[32] See ibid., 69 -70.

[33] All the official announcements below were as quoted in Kurahashi and Otsuka 1997, 235.

> It was in these circumstances that the official exhibition [i.e. the Bunten] displayed its power. Being strict about the deadline for applications and making the judgement more significant and efficient, it showed a good example which influenced the following generations. The total number of applications of the first Bunten was 635 Japanese-style paintings (329 Western-style paintings and 46 sculptures), of which those exhibited were 89 Japanese-style paintings (83 Western-style paintings and 14 sculptures). [Saito 1944, 145–46]

However, the Bunten did not succeed in integrating the various, conflicting art groups in spite of its centralised system. This was partly because these art groups, which had been progressively differentiated from their pre-modern counterparts, gradually developed some characteristics of the pre-modern *iemoto* schools. As a consequence, the Bunten was moulded by the art groups into an organisation to enhance and support the power structure associated with the *iemoto* system. For my discussion of this system based on the absolute *iemoto* master, I apply the conception of the "Emperor system" ("*ten'no sei*" 「天皇制」) advocated by Maruyama Masao (丸山真男), one of the most eminent academics in post-war Japan. It indicates a particular power structure centred on the absolute, deified Emperor, which rested on a longstanding basis of the generations of Japanese rulers who authorised themselves in relation to the Imperial power and which was progressively applied to the modern Japanese polity until the end of World War II.

The Emperor system which most explicitly characterises modern Japan is obviously related to the fact that every aspect of the country was progressively reconstructed under the deified Emperor in the course of its modernisation. For nearly seven hundred years after the prosperity of the ancient Imperial state between the eighth and the tenth centuries, Japan had been ruled by a succession of samurai regimes whose social structure was similar to that of medieval feudalism in Europe. The Imperial Court had never been demolished at any period of the

samurai era, but its political power had been considerably restricted. In 1867, the Tokugawa shogunate, the last and longest of the samurai regimes, abandoned sovereignty to the Court; and in the next year, the Meiji Emperor officially acceded to the throne of the new modern nation-state, Japan (Nihon, Nippon [日本]). The Emperor was located in the centre of the exhaustive programme of constructing the nation as a direct descendant of the Sun Goddess (Amaterasu Omikami [天照大神]) who created the divine country (i.e. Japan) according to Shintoist (神道) mythology and archives. Although the absolute power of the Emperor seems incompatible with the European conception of "modern" nation, it was the very form of power which developed in Japan throughout the late nineteenth and the mid twentieth centuries in the name of "modernisation".

Maruyama distinguishes this modern regime of Japan from the absolute monarchies which developed in Europe after the sixteenth century. He states that the establishment of European absolutism was conditioned by the separation and liberation of the human world from Almighty God. The sovereigns acquired their absolutism only when they emancipated themselves from the restraints of the religious natural law associated with the medieval feudalism and elevated their status from the "Protector of Order" ("*Defensor Pacis*") to its "Creator" ("*Creator Pacis*") (Maruyama 1964, 26–27). This precondition applies to Machiavellism which was one of the earliest attempts to examine the power system of absolute monarchy. The Machiavellian conception of absolutism was "an antithesis of Christianity which functioned as a weapon to justify the papal sovereignty", and it argued for certain principles within the secular political system independent of the religious power (ibid., 403). Thus, in the earliest form of the nation-state which would be distinguished from the decentralised state of feudalism, the personal

quality of the individual sovereign as a "creator" of order became more significant than before. In the Emperor system of modern Japan, on the contrary, the absolute ruler was progressively deified – so much so that he (not she, because of the patriotic restriction) became the Divinity itself. The transition of Japanese sovereignty from the samurai feudalism to the modern nation-state was materialised not through a positive separation from, but through a dramatic conversion to religious absolutism, while its process successfully centralised the medieval society. As a consequence, the Emperor occupied a unique position which was not totally identified with the "Protector of Order" nor the "Creator of Order". When he was positioned in the centre of the new nation, the source of his authority was sought not in his own quality as a ruler but in the two-and-half-a-millennium lineage of his divine family. Of course, he himself incarnated the absolute value constituting the latest part this lineage, but at the same time he could not embody absolute power by himself as the European rulers did. The authority of the Emperor became infallible and immutable only provided that he conformed himself to the divine tradition of his predecessors.

> His Majesty was heir to the Imperial line unbroken for ages eternal and he ruled by virtue of the final injunctions of his ancestors. The Imperial Constitution, granted to the people in 1889, was not regarded as having been created by the Emperor himself; rather it was a document that 'transmitted the immutable law according to which the land has been governed'. Thus the Emperor too was saddled with a burden – in his case a tradition that derived from the infinitely remote past. It was only because his existence was inextricably involved with the ancestral tradition, in such a way that he and his Imperial Ancestors formed a single unit, that he was regarded as being the ultimate embodiment of internal values. [Maruyama 1964, 27 as translated in Maruyama 1969, 20]

In the European notion of the divine right of kings, the sovereign was rendered the reign by God; but the monarch was not identified with God. Therefore, the

sovereign was required to prove personal qualities that were apt for ruling a nation as well as the legitimacy of his birth as the rightful heir to the throne.

Moreover, this "Emperor system" is identified in the power structure of various organisations formed in various sections of modern Japanese society – public offices, schools, agricultural co-operatives, armies, etc. Each of these groups in Japan embodies a minor version of the "Emperor system" under an autocratic figure. The correlation between the power structure associated with the Emperor and the *iemoto* system is discussed in relation to various historical and contemporary examples by Nishiyama Matsunosuke (西山松之助) in his comprehensive studies (1982a, 1982b). Although he does not refer to Maruyama's model, the Emperor system Nishiyama discusses in comparison to the *iemoto* system is closely connected with the one Maruyama discusses. First of all, the *iemoto*, the absolute master of a school, corresponds to the Emperor. Like the Emperor, the indisputable authority of the *iemoto* derives from the lineage of successive eminent predecessors who handed over the traditional styles and skills of the school. He is neither an innovative creator nor a protector of the tradition; in the school, he is the Divinity who embodies omnipotent power and eternal tradition. The *iemoto* system also possesses the structural properties which are brought about as a consequence of the Emperor system. Firstly, under this system, the social position one occupies in the society (or the school) is determined by his/her proximity to the Emperor (Maruyama 1964, 23, 25, 27, etc.). The closer he/she is to the ultimate divine centre, the higher position he/she occupies in the hierarchy. In the *iemoto* system, disciples would never unify themselves with the *iemoto* himself since it is essentially reserved for those who were born in the particular family, and they would make every effort to master their artistic skills

and dispositions in order to get as close to the absolute tradition of the *iemoto* family as possible. Those who are recognised by the *iemoto* are licensed to teach their own disciples, becoming minor Emperors themselves. Secondly, when the ultimate value is presupposed as sacred and indisputable, power struggles would not occur over the construction of the value itself but are restricted to those over the claim for "orthodoxy" in relation to the predetermined standard. Whenever the factions in a school are in contention with each other, what is at issue is not "which represents the truth" but "which embodies the orthodox tradition of the school" and "which is the heretic" (see Maruyama 1996, 123–24). The significance of orthodoxy in the *iemoto* system is discussed in details by Nishiyama (1982a, 91–94). He proves that the genealogy of orthodox heredity was explicitly invented and developed in a wide range of cultural activities during the Edo period (1603–1867). Various schools of arts and scholarship authorised themselves by composing the pedigrees in which they can claim their legitimacy. This practice was not necessarily grounded on historical facts. In extreme cases, a school made up apparently a fictitious figure in a remote past as its founder, and the genealogy of its orthodoxy was formed on the basis of this imaginary authority and his/her imaginary link with the real authority.

I shall make two further points concerning the *iemoto* system from Nishiyama's study (1982a). The first point is that the authority of the Emperor and the *iemoto* embodies a form of power which Nishiyama describes as "an incompetent, omnipotent, divine, and powerless being" (「無能にして万能である神聖なる無力者」) (88–90). I have already discussed the Emperor as a particular form of power distinguished from the "Creator of Order" represented by the Western absolute monarchy. The authority of the Emperor depended not on his individual

creativity but on the longstanding tradition of his predecessors. Nishiyama develops this sense of powerlessness associated with the Emperor in the context of various cultural practices in Japan. This "imaginary" power of the Emperor has always ruled Japanese society since his ancient authority collapsed when samurai power became predominant. Successive samurai governments, though, never extinguished the Imperial Court even if its power was restricted by law to a great degree. Instead, the samurai rulers manipulated the Imperial authority to secure their sovereignty. For example, the successive shoguns of the Tokugawa regime were invariably appointed to the Seii Taishogun (征夷大将軍) – the commander of the Imperial army to suppress the barbarians in Eastern Japan – by the Emperor in the western capital of Kyoto. This power structure was followed by the *iemoto* schools which were formed in various cultural fields particularly in the latter half of the Edo period (ibid., 88–90). The *iemoto* masters of these schools were not necessarily those who excelled at artistic skills. In many cases, they were typically taken up by people of high rank in relation to the Imperial Court – such as aristocrats and priests – who were virtually ignorant in the cultural practices of which they were supposed be the "masters". Secondly, the basis of both the *iemoto* and the Emperor systems is not one-way transmission of authority from the central power but the interdependence between the central power which attempts to consolidate its authority and its followers who manipulate the authority of their master to enhance their own. The authorisation of the *iemoto* master is required by the populace who become greatly skilful in certain artistic and cultural practices but who know no other way to assert their competence than by depending on the authority of those who are conventionally regarded as influential in the society, especially the one associated with ancient authority of good lineage (ibid., 85–88).

After referring to several cases of the *iemoto* system in the Edo and post-war societies, Nishiyama criticises it as "superficial" and "thoughtless" to attack only the *iemoto* masters for the persistence of the pre-modern system and maintains that the "loyal retainers" under the absolute master should be more seriously and carefully examined (ibid., 90).

In the course of its development after 1907, the Bunten exhibition was progressively reorganised to empower this system which structured the factions of the official exhibition. In order to make this point, I focus on the reorganisation of the Bunten in 1919. It was in this particular context that the characteristics of the official exhibition associated with the pre-modern Japanese tradition were shown most clearly before the opening of the Metropolitan museum. The Bunten exhibition had been run by the hanging committee since its first show in 1907, but it was renamed "Teiten" (「帝展」; literally meaning, "Imperial Exhibition", which is the abbreviation of the "Art Exhibition of the Imperial Academy of Art" ["Teikoku Bijutsu In Bijutsu Tenrankai"「帝国美術院美術展覧会」]) since the Imperial Academy of Art (Teikoku Bijutsu In [帝国美術院]) took the place of the committee twelve years later. This reorganisation of the Japanese Salon was a response to a series of severe criticisms of its tastes and its procedures of judgement which had long been raised in the newly-developed printed media. The Ministry of Education which sponsored the exhibition intended to tackle the wide-spread distrust of it and to recover its authority. The evidence of the *iemoto* system can be identified in the criticisms which centred on the judgement system of the exhibition. Here I mention two changes made by the hanging committee about their procedures of judgement which were broadly denounced by contemporary experts. Firstly, almost all the scholars and art critics were dismissed from the committee from the

eighth exhibition in 1914. Only Mori Rintaro (森林太郎, 1862–1922) was allowed to remain; he was a leading intellectual who taught anatomy at the Tokyo Art College as a medical doctor and who published a number of reviews, essays, and novels as a celebrated writer.[34] As a consequence, the committee was virtually monopolised by artists. Secondly, the number of works exempt from the judgement was considerably expanded. I have already discussed in Section 2 that the Bunten, as a system for producing new classics of Japanese art, exhibited works exempt from the judgement system as well as those of the winners. These works outside the judgement system included those of current and old members of the hanging committee, of all the first and second prize winners from the past, and of the artists recommended and agreed by more than three-quarter members of the committee. In the tenth exhibition (1916), these authorised works were dramatically increased by the introduction of the "special prize" ("*tokusen*" 「特選」) and the "lifetime exemption" ("*shushin mukansa*" 「終身無鑑査」). The purpose of former was to give all the works accepted by the exhibition "special prizes", which allowed their creators to exhibit their new works without examination in the following year. The latter was a system to guarantee selected artists a privilege of unconditional acceptance of their new works by the exhibition every year until their death.

These changes provided the Bunten with an organisational structure to enhance the existing *iemoto* system. They were prompted by the *iemoto* masters and their disciples, who were both connected to the "art groups" which the official exhibition consisted of, and consequently the Bunten revealed a variety of effects

---

[34] His *nom de plume* was Mori Ogai (森鴎外), under which name he published a series of writings including novels such as *Maihime* (舞姫: *Dancing Girl*, 1890) and *Gan* (雁: *Wild Geese*, 1911–13), and Japanese translations of Goethe's *Faust* and Andersen's *Improvisatoren (Improvisator)*.

and conditions which were criticised by outsiders as "abuses" of the system associated with the art groups. I make three points here about these abuses which were at issue before the reorganisation of the exhibition. First of all, the guarantee of the lifetime exemption essentially authorised the *iemoto* masters in the annual exhibition. The members of the hanging committee consisted of the *iemoto* masters representing the factions within the Bunten. However, their position was neither fixed nor secured; the masters were always under threat of dismissal. The most extreme example may be the contrastive choices of the committee members for the first and the second exhibitions. The first exhibition was boycotted by the Old School Japanese-style painters because of the apparent favouritism of the Ministry of Education toward the New School in their choice of the committee members, and the second exhibition on the contrary was boycotted by the New School because the committee was dominated by the Old School masters. In this system, a work of a master was accepted unconditionally if he/she was a committee member one year, but the master might have to join the competition like any other minor artists in the following year, and even worse there was always a possibility that his/her work might not be accepted. As the master was supposed to be an infallible "Emperor" of the group, this instability was unsatisfactory. The lifetime exemption successfully removed this risk. It secured the divine master of a life after the hanging committee.

The second point is an issue of the so-called "Bunten style" or "official taste". In the last section, I argued that the Bunten as a system for producing new classics lacked any decisive direction in its artistic preference. However, some tendencies, which were generally recognisable in the accepted works, were widely mentioned and often criticised by contemporary journalism. For example, two notable men of

letters, Natsume Soseki (夏目漱石, 1867–1916) and Takamura Kotaro (高村光太郎, 1883–1956), both published essays on the sixth Bunten exhibition in 1912; they both criticised the conservatism of the exhibition which selected only the works of similar tendencies regardless of their artistic value.[35] It was not because the Bunten officials were suddenly inspired to promote certain values; but the Bunten style was produced by the *iemoto* system. Each master in the hanging committee would like to see as many works of his/her disciples as possible exhibited at the annual event. Favouritism towards his/her own faction was prevalent and obvious in the process of judgement. It was a duty naturally expected of the master that he/she would make every effort so that the works of his/her disciples would be selected, and this was crucial for the prosperity of the master himself/herself as well as of his/her circle. The number of the works exhibited at the annual event from a group represented the power of the group and its master(s) in the Bunten. This tendency had already been apparent even before the establishment of the official exhibition. The circumstance of the "unofficial group exhibitions" (simply because there was *no* official exhibition) in the pre-Bunten age was described as below:

> Since the existing exhibitions were all run by unofficial groups, the selection of their works could not be easily made partly because of their intention to exhibit as many as possible to keep up appearances and partly because of their prevailing favouritism. Their hanging committees had become nominal, and so these exhibitions always exhibited more than several hundred works, of which only a couple of dozens were worth seeing. [Saito 1944, 145]

Under the master-disciple relationships associated with the *iemoto* system, the skills and styles one faction would apply to artistic works tended to be identical among all its members from a master to a minor member. Then, the styles of

---

[35] See Takumi 1983, 32–33. The original essays are: Natsume Soseki, "Bunten to geijutsu" (夏目漱石「文展と芸術」) and Takamura Kotaro, "Comments on the Western

dominant figures and major groups flooded the galleries of the Bunten exhibition, and there emerged a vague but acute sense of the Bunten style. The increasing number of the works exempt of the normal judgement process intensified this sense of particular trends in the official exhibition. The expanded exemption system allowed those predominant groups to accumulate their glorious achievement in the past and to show them in public at the exhibition every year. Thus the accumulating quantity of the works of certain styles and the repetition of their display made the official taste of the Bunten more visible than ever before. The kind of art specifically noticeable at the Bunten was often called, scornfully, "state art" ("*kokutei geijutsu*"「国定芸術」), but the state itself was not involved much in the process of its making.

The last point is the significance of the monopolisation of the hanging committee by those artists in relation to the *iemoto* system. As I mentioned above, academics and critics were progressively excluded from the committee from 1914. This personnel transfer indicated the exclusion of those who were outside the *iemoto* system of artists. Thereafter, the favouritism which had already been prevalent in the judgement process became more audacious and rampant.

The reorganisation of the Bunten in 1919 transformed it into an exhibition sponsored by the Imperial Academy as its European counterparts. However, it failed to deconstruct the *iemoto* system, which the Bunten had conformed to and which had been so severely criticised. The reorganisation only managed to rejuvenate the emperors in the hanging committee. The old masters were "promoted" to become members of the Imperial Academy but deprived of real power, and the younger artists took their place to administer the Teiten (Takeda 1969,

---

Paintings" (高村光太郎「西洋画所見」).

91–112). The official style may have changed accordingly as the younger generations introduced new trends (Takeda 1969, 92–94; Takumi 1983, 64), but those artists were still *iemoto* masters of their own circles and the exemption system remained intact. In fact, the conditions of the official exhibition were similar when the official exhibition was reorganised again in 1935. The number of the unconditionally accepted works continued to increase, and they started to restrict the space available for contributions from new talents. This attempt led by Educational Minister Matsuda Genji (松田源治) intended (1) to unite the official and unofficial exhibitions by inviting the masters from the unofficial groups into the Imperial Academy, and (2) to abolish all the exemptions and reconsider them. Of course, this plan, generally called "Matsuda reorganisation" ("*Matsuda kaiso*" 「松田改組」), did not materialise because of the strong opposition from the *iemoto* masters and their disciples resided in the Teiten (Kurahashi and Otsuka 1997, 213–14).

Thus, despite the initial intention of materialising a Japanese version of the French Salon, the Bunten was appropriated by the art groups so as to maintain and enhance their *iemoto* system. This peculiarity of the Bunten was partly associated with the development of the "new art" and its distinction from the pre-modern forms of art. As I have discussed in the last section, the new kind of art represented by the three categories included in the Bunten exhibition – "Japanese-style painting", "Western-style painting", and "sculpture" – was a hybrid of Western concepts and Japanese artistic practices. It was unprecedented in the sense that it had no direct connection to any form of pre-modern artistic practices. The antiques which had been dismantled from the tutelage of the pre-modern ruling classes during the early Meiji were progressively appropriated by the newly-rising middle classes (Guth 1993). However, as regards the new art, no cultural knowledge had yet

developed to appreciate it and no relation had yet been established between the cultural competence required for its consumption and any particular social classes. In this sense, the "cultural capital" and the "habitus" associated with the new art were still in the early stages of their development. Pre-modern Japanese art was actively historicised at such institutions as the Imperial Museums and the Tokyo Art College as a basis of the new classics of the Bunten; but the new art, lacking any categorical and aesthetic links to these pre-modern classics, remained unhistoricised. The art groups most typically developed in relation to the new artistic categories; and their peculiar power structure and value system associated with the *iemoto* system orientated the official sphere of contemporary art.

4.5. Conclusion

The Bunten, the Japanese Salon, thus developed peculiar characteristics in comparison to its Western model in the course of "transculturation" between the Western-born institution and the particular circumstances of Meiji Japan. The Bunten was expected to designate "new classics" according to the strategy of "the future's past" like its Western counterpart. Based on progressively historicised antiques, the Japanese Salon was supposed to select the contemporary masterpieces, which would be regarded as part of the canon in the future and purchased by the Ministry of Education envisaging a new museum specialising modern/contemporary art. However, this official exhibition did not develop as such. Instead, it established a unique organisation in relation to the social and cultural conditions specific to contemporary Japan – more precisely those associated with the development of the old and the new arts as separate categories, the absence of any curatorial authority informed by art historical perspectives, and the increasing

number of art groups which conformed to the *iemoto* system of pre-modern schools of various cultural practices.

In the interactions between these various conditions, the official exhibition itself was progressively assimilated to the *iemoto* system of the art groups. The *iemoto* system, associated with the Emperor system, is one of the most important elements which continue to develop in relation to a wide range of art and culture throughout the twentieth century. Not to mention the traditional forms of cultural and artistic practices which are still practised in Japan today, Nishiyama's studies (1982b) identify the *iemoto* system in a variety of "modern" and "Western" genres and their institutions such as dressmaking, hairdressing, literary circles, university, Western-style theatre, and avant-garde dance. Of course, the "art groups" and their "art world" are no exceptions. Their more comprehensive development followed the disintegration of the Bunten in the mid-1910s. The official exhibition which consisted of various art groups disclosed its internal conflicts in the form of a number of independent groups established out of the official sphere. These "unofficial" groups increased dramatically throughout the next few decades, and the most established of them particularly developed the characteristics of the *iemoto* system. In this process, the relations between the unhistoricised modern art and the *iemoto* system would become clearer. The split between the new art and the pre-modern art was the reason I raised in this chapter; but, in the next chapter, it is revealed that the nexus of art history, collections, and permanent displays would undermine the absolute power of *iemoto* masters.

The next chapter launches my historical inquiries into the phenomenon of the "empty museums". My discussion focuses on the first public art museum established in Japan, the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum. Although the Bunten

did not develop in relation to any institution that would historicise modern/contemporary art, the campaign for the establishment of the national museum to accomplish this historicisation was continued by artists, critics, journalists, and bureaucrats in the Taisho era (1912–1926). The most significant years during this period were 1918 and 1919.[36] In these two years, the national museum plan was just about to be materialised again after proposals and recommendations were submitted to national and local authorities by the members of the Bunten hanging committee, the Artists for the Imperial Household, the National Art Association (Kokumin Bijutsu Kyokai [国民美術協会], 1913),[37] and the Association for the Construction of an Art Museum (Bijutsukan Kisei Domei Kai [美術館期成同盟会], 1918).[38] At last, the Association for the Construction of an Art Museum took the leadership of the campaign and managed to persuade the Ministry of Education to appropriate ¥3,500,000 for the new museum in the summer of 1919; but this budget was also withdrawn after a few months (Kumamoto 1959 [*Gendai no me* 55]). Although the museum in the final plan was equipped with the galleries for art group exhibitions as well as those for permanent exhibitions of the museum collections, the commitment to historicise modern art remained important throughout the early-Taisho campaign. For example, the

---

[36] For a detailed discussion of the Taisho campaign, see Kumamoto 1959 (*Gendai no me* 51–55).

[37] The National Art Association was launched in the second year of Taisho under the leadership of Kuroda Seiki, an eminent Western-style painter, member of the "artists for the Imperial Household", and professor of the Tokyo Art College. It consisted mainly of the artists belonging to the Bunten, ranging from painters to architects. See Kumamoto 1958 (*Gendai no me* 40).

[38] The Association for the Construction of an Art Museum was formed at the initiative of journalism. The Association, chaired by Masaki Naohiko, the president of the Tokyo Art School, included representatives from ten newspaper publishers and several journals as well as some artists. See Kumamoto 1959 (*Gendai no me* 53–55).

National Art Association, headed by Kuroda Seiki, most clearly indicated this in its recommendation submitted to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government in 1915 (Kumamoto 1958 [*Gendai no me* 40, 42]), and the chairman of the Association for the Construction of an Art Museum was Masaki Naohiko, who was one of the original proposers of the Bunten (see 4.1) and who persisted to the official purchases from the Bunten winners in prospect of a new national museum of modern art.[39] A series of movements leading to the establishment of the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum would start just after this failure of the 1918–19 campaign. The new campaign was launched at the beginning of 1921 by a movement separate from the previous one, though it eventually succeeded in involving the majority of those who proceeded the campaign in the previous decade. Koike Motoyasu (小池素康), Councillor of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, undertook the new campaign, and it was executed not as a national project but as a part of a large-scale event planned by the Metropolitan Government. The first recommendation Koike and his colleagues submitted to the Metropolitan Assembly in January 1921 shows that they followed the precedents of the national-museum campaigns in their image of the new museum – an institution equipped with both the temporary galleries for art group exhibitions and the permanent displays of modern art collections (Sawa 1925, 2–3). However, the museum they realised resulted in the first example of the "empty" museum. In the next chapter, I discuss the process of the establishment of this first empty museum. The issues I examined in this chapter concerning the Bunten, including the post-Meiji art which remained unhistoricised, its weak link with curatorial authority informed by art

---

[39] See Masaki's comment in *Bijutsu Shinron* (February 1932) quoted in Kumamoto 1961 (*Gendai no me* 77).

history, and the development of the *iemoto* system associated with the art groups, would all prove essential to my discussion. The field of *bijutsu*, now the era moved on from Meiji to Taisho, would expand these elements further and evolve on a larger scale.

Chapter 5

The Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum and the Development of Art Groups

5.1. Introduction

The phenomenon of empty museums in post-war Japan is commonly attributed to their predecessor – the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, the first public art museum in Japan built in 1926. This view is generally shared by many museum experts in Japan even in supposedly "neutral" contexts. For instance, a recent reference book of museology writes:

> This art museum [the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum] set up a permanent display room, "Sato Memorial Suite", in a part of the building in 1952. However, it had been a "rental gallery" to let its gallery spaces to various art groups until the new building was completed in 1975. This fact had a great influence on the public art museums which were established later, and it resulted in producing "art museums in Japanese style" as "art galleries", not art museums as "genuine museums". [Kurata, et al. 1996, 261]

The foundation of this observation is the implication that the art museum should be based on its own collection and permanent exhibits and that without them the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum fell short of an ideal model. It is claimed that this unsuccessful case was an unfortunate precursor for other public art museums, most of which were built in the 1970s and 80s.

This chapter discusses why this first public art museum was established as an "empty" museum. However, my purpose is not to accuse the Metropolitan Museum of failing to copy the Western standard models. Instead, I examine why social and cultural circumstances specific to contemporary Japan produced an art museum so distinct from its Western counterparts. This first model of the empty museum was

built neither by accident nor by mistake; neither was it a result of complete ignorance of curatorial practices in contemporary Western museums. Its characteristic "emptiness" was based on positive decisions made by those who were involved in its project. Despite persistent demands for the establishment of a European-style museum with collections and permanent galleries, the Museum took up a no-collection policy. My concern here is therefore the particular conditions in Japan in the 1920s which authorised and justified such a decision for the characteristics of the Museum which was to remain dominant in the post-war institutions.

Before pursuing my argument, I summarise how this first public art museum in Japan was materialised in May 1926. After the failure of the serial attempts on the national level to establish a public museum of modern art at the very end of the 1910s (see 4.5), a new campaign was launched in January 1921 by Koike Motoyasu (小池素康), Councillor of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, to realise this project by taking advantage of the Peace Memorial Tokyo Exposition (Heiwa Kinen Tokyo Hakurankai [平和記念東京博覧会]) in the next year. Councillor Koike and his allies submitted to the chairman of the Metropolitan assembly a suggestion that a permanent art gallery should be built instead of a barrack for the temporary use of the exposition, and it was discussed at the assembly. In March, the first large meeting was held, whose promoters were related to twenty-three art institutions (i.e. art groups, art college, and exhibition organisers), and it presented to the Home Secretary of the State and the Metropolitan Governor of Tokyo a proposal which emphasised the importance of this project and which declared that this group should take the initiative. This collective statement was taken favourably by the national and regional newspapers, but two main problems remained. One was the

financial resource of ¥500,000, which the campaigners argued should be added to the ¥300,000 allocated by the Metropolitan Government for the temporary art gallery for the Peace Memorial Tokyo Exposition, in order to realise the permanent building. The other was the site. The site most favoured among those concerned was a part of the ground belonging to the Tokyo Art College, which was hesitant about this idea. However, the financial matter took an unexpected turn for the better. Soon after the proposal of the art groups was announced, an entrepreneur from the Kyushu island, Sato Keitaro (佐藤慶太郎, 1867–1940), offered a donation of ¥1,000,000.[1] In June, the second large meeting of the committee took place, inviting Sato, to bring the plan for the art museum to realisation in time for the Peace Memorial Exposition in March next year; but it was already too late and the project was called off for a year for the preparation of the Exposition which included a temporary art gallery. In 1923, the Tokyo Art College finally refused the proposed use of their ground for the new art museum because it was an important area where the students sketched for their work. The committee started to look into the possibility of obtaining a part of the imperial ground in Ueno, but the Kanto Great Earthquake (Kanto daishinsai [関東大震災]) in September obstructed progress again.[2] In January 1924, commemorating an auspicious royal event, a site in the Ueno Park was presented by the Director general of the Imperial Household Agency for the metropolitan museum project. In September of the same year, work on the art museum began at last.

---

[1] Saito (1987, 24) translates the value of ¥1,000,000 in those days, based on the price of newspaper. Admitting that this calculation may be over-simplified, he estimates it as ¥2,000,000,000 (£10,000,000).

[2] The Kanto Great Earthquake which directly hit the Tokyo metropolitan area claimed more than 120,000 damaged houses, 450,000 burned houses, and 140,000 deaths and missing.

Before proceeding further, it is important to identify two issues about the particular circumstances affecting this process of the establishment of the Metropolitan Museum. First, the relations between government and culture specific to nineteenth-century Western liberalism did not develop wholesale in early-twentieth-century Japan. However, there were some signs to indicate the emergence of the ideas of "governmental mode of power" during the decade just before the establishment of the Metropolitan Museum. Between the mid-1910s and the mid-1920s, a substantial number of surveys on leisure and entertainment were conducted in Japanese cities for the first time in history.[3] Those surveys represented a turning point in the governmental use of state leisure policy, in a similar way to that seen in the transformation from sovereign power to governmental power in Europe.

> The Meiji government (1868–1912) regarded popular entertainment simply as something to watch and control for the maintenance of peace and order. However, in the Taisho era (1912–25), the establishment of leisure policies started to be considered more significant and urgent in the perspectives of social education to enlighten the populace and guide their thoughts in the right direction. [Hirano 1991, 148]

It was a time of social turbulence in Japan when the urban working-class population increased dramatically as a result of rapid industrialisation and sharp inflation after World War I, which stimulated conflicts between labourers and their employers. Socialism became prevalent, and a series of social movements for democracy, the "Taisho Democracy" ("*Taisho demokurashi*"「大正デモクラシー」), led by the increasing number of the middle classes took place. In such circumstances,

---

[3] See Hirano 1991. As background factors for the development of the leisure surveys in this period, he points out: (1) The dramatic expansion of urban working class and the increasing social problems and industrial disputes, (2) the industrialisation and problematisation of popular entertainment, and (3) the fusion of social/labour policies and academic researches (144).

the use of cultural resources and the strategic "disposition" of cultural institutions were found significant as effective methods to govern an unruly populace. In Osaka, the commercial capital of Japan, municipal government established "cultural centres" ("*shiminkan*" 「市民館」), equipped with meeting rooms, libraries, halls for concerts and lectures, and dining rooms, for the improvement of the leisure activities of citizens in the latter half of the 1920s. This project was informed by the findings of a municipal survey in 1923.[4] The two proposals presented by the campaigners for the Metropolitan Museum in 1921 that I discussed above were both based on the belief that "Ideals govern thoughts; tastes govern feelings" (「思想ヲ支配スルモノハ理想ニシテ、感情ヲ支配スルモノハ趣味ニテ候」) and stressed the significance of "art" as an expression of human ideals and tastes.[5] They also argued explicitly for the usefulness of art – and therefore the art museum – to "harmonise and guide" ("*yuwa zendō*" 「融和善導」) the aggravated thoughts and feelings of contemporaries. These tendencies in the Taisho era may seem to conform to the growing importance of art and art museums in liberal strategies to improve the behaviours and tastes of the lower classes in late-nineteenth-century Europe (see 3.4). Nevertheless, in the social conditions specific to contemporary Japan – especially its political system based on a particular form of "sovereignty" of the Emperor – culture was not seen as an appropriate means of governance in the way that occurred in Europe. Accordingly, these museum plans were never considered and pursued as a part of the governmental programme.

The second issue concerns the art groups. In the last chapter, I showed that at the turn of the century the art groups – including bureaucrats, merchant,

---

[4] See Hirano 1991, 161–72.

[5] See the actual texts of the proposals reprinted in Sawa 1925, 9–20.

upper-class connoisseurs, and increasingly artists – developed a new field of art, i.e. *bijutsu*, consisting of three forms of "new art" – Japanese-style painting, Western-style painting, and sculpture. By the mid-1920s, this field had expanded dramatically. A number of these groups had been established outside the Bunten mainly by being separated directly from it, and they flourished as "unofficial" ("*zaiya*" 「在野」) groups that organised their own exhibitions independently of the official exhibition. In the year before the opening of the Metropolitan Museum, a contemporary article referred to as many as six "established" exhibitions, including the Teiten (a reorganised version of the Bunten sponsored by the Imperial Academy of Art [Teikoku Bijutsuin 帝国美術院]), the Nika (二科), the Inten (院展; the exhibition of the Japanese Academy of Art), the Shunyo Kai (春陽会), the Kokuten (国展; the exhibition of the Kokuga Sosaku Kyokai [国画創作協会]), and the Chuten (中展; the exhibition of the Chuo Bijutsu Sha [中央美術社]) (*Chuo Bijutsu* 12.5, 78). Their significance was evident in the process of the establishment of the Metropolitan Museum. Among the twenty-three institutions which campaigned for the first public art museum, twenty-one were identified with those "art groups" which held regular and usually competitive exhibitions.[6] As a consequence, the Museum was established by those groups of artists and manipulated almost exclusively by them. Except for a few privately-sponsored special exhibitions a year, the Museum's galleries were completely monopolised by the competitive exhibitions organised annually by the art groups. In the first year, it

---

[6] See Sawa 1925 for the list of the organisations. The two institutions which are not exactly regarded as art groups are the Tokyo Art College and the Tokyo Competition for the Frames and Mounts (Tokyo Hyoso Kyogikai [東京表装競技会]). The former was closely related to the art groups, to which most students of the college exhibited their works during and after their study. The latter, a group of frame and mount makers, was engaged in activities similar to those of the art

accommodated eight group exhibitions after its opening exhibition of mixed groups in May; the number of groups increased to thirty in the next year.

In this chapter, I argue that the characteristics acquired by the Metropolitan Museum were formed as a consequence of a particular situation in which the art groups were allowed to manipulate its galleries for their own use. The emptiness of the Museum was precisely what these groups wanted. In the 1920s, the art groups prospered more than ever before; and in their heyday the first empty museum was inaugurated. The correlation between the art groups and the empty museum becomes more evident when we consider the post-war development of empty museums. As I showed in Chapter 2, the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum is still dominated by the art groups, and many other "empty" public art museums established after the war accommodate the exhibitions organised by local and national art groups. As I argued in the last chapter, the prosperity of those groups of artists was a phenomenon peculiar to modern Japan. Although they were "modern" groups explicitly distinguishing themselves from the "schools" that had developed in various artistic and cultural practices in pre-Meiji Japan, their organisational structure remained identical to the *iemoto*/Emperor system on which those pre-modern schools were based. The modern groups progressively transformed the system and function of the official exhibition which was first expected to designate new classics from the contemporary works as its European model did. In this chapter, I shall argue that the unofficial groups also embodied the characteristics associated with the *iemoto* system of its official counterpart. This characteristic of the official and unofficial art groups was closely linked with the emptiness of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum. I show that the fact that

---

groups, regularly holding competitive exhibitions.

the art groups preferred an institution without collections and permanent displays was related to one central characteristic of those groups, their adherence to the *iemoto* system and the Emperor system.

5.2. The No-Collection Policy of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum

The service regulations of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum issued on 31 March 1926 ("Tokyo-fu Bijutsukan shokusei", Tokyo-fu-rei, no. 33. [「東京府美術館職制」東京府令第33号]) began with the article declaring that its purpose was to exhibit works of art, to display both antiques and contemporary works, and to promote other projects essential to the development of art.[7] The fact that this article referred to neither "collection" nor "preservation" as principal tasks of the new institution was by no means due to the forgetfulness or ignorance of officials. It was based on a positive decision taken by the management policy of the Museum, clearly intending to focus on offering its galleries for the use of artists and connoisseurs – not exclusively but mainly related to the "art groups" – to exhibit their works or to organise events such as special exhibitions. This no-collection policy was clearly envisaged by the campaigners, who comprised twenty-one art groups, at the early stage of the Museum's planning. Although some expressed their interests in collections and permanent displays for the new institution, these criticisms and suggestions were eventually overwhelmed by an emergent demand of the art groups for a permanent building for their regular exhibitions. In this section, I discuss how the art groups that led the campaign for the establishment of the

---

[7] For the original text, see Tokyo-to Bijutsukan 1955, 21. The regulations for its users enforced on the next day (ibid., 30–31) also carried a similar article which stated that its use should be granted if a user aims at (1) the exhibition of the works of art, or (2) the display of the antique and contemporary art objects, or (3) other

Museum made a positive decision in favour of a no-collections policy on the part of the first public art museum.

This significant policy decision was made officially on 30 April 1921 at the advisory meeting prior to the second great meeting in June. The advisory committee including Governor Abe Hiroshi (阿部浩), chairman of the committee, Councillor Koike Motoyasu, Professor Okada Shinichiro (岡田信一郎) from Waseda University (Waseda Daigaku [早稲田大学])[8] who later became responsible for the architecture of the Museum, and Professor Masaki Naohiko (正木直彦), President of the Tokyo Art College. They decided that the new museum should focus on its function as an exhibition space for art based on the proposal of Councillor Koike to the Metropolitan assembly. The proposal, signed by the representatives from twenty-three art institutions including twenty-one art groups, was presented on 26 January 1921. It maintained that the principal purpose of the Museum should be to provide a space for art exhibitions and that a part of the Museum might be devoted to display the works of modern art. The latter purpose seems to suggest a "permanent" display, but the emphasis was on the former function.[9] This inclination toward a gallery rather than a fully-functional museum was evident in Councillor Koike's series of proposals and other statements. Since he maintained the necessity of the permanent art museum in Tokyo to win the election of the Tokyo Metropolitan assembly in September 1919, he had led the campaign in practice and made all the political arrangements involved. In his statements and

---

projects concerning art (*bijutsu*).

[8] Waseda University is one of the oldest and most prestigious private universities in Japan, established in 1882 by Okuma Shigenobu (大隈重信, 1838–1922). Okuma was an eminent political figure in Meiji – Taisho Japan, who served two terms as Prime Minister (1898 and 1914–16). Also see 5.3 for the role of the university in the early development of art criticisms.

the documents he prepared on behalf of the campaigners, he consistently called the Museum, "*bijutsu chinretsukan*" (「美術陳列館」) or "*bijutsu tenrankaijo*" (「美術展覧会場」), which literally meant "display gallery for art" or "exhibition gallery for art" with the implication of temporary and commercial events. For example, his proposal above and the resolutions after the first great meeting both refer to the Art Museum as "*bijutsu chinretsukan*"; the other term, "*bijutsu tenrankaijo*", was used in the memo produced after the advisory meeting for the first great gathering and in a series of proposals by the representatives from art groups presented in March 1921 to Governor, Mayor, and each member of the municipal and metropolitan assemblies. His preference for describing the new institution as an art gallery represented the intention of the art groups. He was a politician; but he made these proposals on behalf of the campaigning body mainly consisting of the representatives of the art groups. Moreover, Councillor Koike himself represented an art group, Rinkansha (林間社, 1920), which regularly sponsored competitive exhibitions of contemporary art as well as its predecessor, Bijutsu Kensei Kai (美術研精会, 1903–20) (Tokyo Bijutsukan 1928, 25).

The Metropolitan Museum campaigners were not unaware of the curatorial and management policies based on collections and permanent displays that were commonly practised in European art museums. In the process of the establishment of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, the campaigners encountered suggestions and criticisms against their plans from at least two different sources. Firstly, as Saito (1987, 1988) points out, the donor of the million yen, Sato Keitaro, apparently envisaged an art museum with a permanent exhibition based on its own collection when he decided to rescue the Metropolitan

---

[9] The full text of the proposal is reprinted in Sawa1925, 2–3.

Museum project from collapse. Sato was deeply moved by a leader entitled "Permanent Art Museum" ("Josetsu Bijutsukan"「常設美術館」) in a daily paper, *Jiji Shinpo* (『時事新報』), on 17 March 1921 which lamented the long-standing financial problem and maintained the necessity of establishing the Museum. The article called for the protection of "genuine" *bijutsu* and the establishment of a permanent art museum which would represent the art and culture of the nation and rival those in European cities. Its tone was ambiguous but referred to a museum based on a substantial collection, not only a space to accommodate different exhibitions. In any case, Sato, who read this article, understood "the permanent art museum" as something more than a gallery space for temporary exhibitions. His letter to Governor Abe Hiroshi which offered a donation toward the Art Museum project (6 April 1921) reads:

> The reason I wish for the realisation of the Art Museum is that it has always been a great shame for the intellectuals of our country not to have even a single permanent art museum, despite the fact that the Japanese Empire is not only esteemed highly in and out of the country as the Eastern nation of art but also is by no means without anything to be proud of as a country of art in the whole world. We have no place to protect our antiques forever and to promote our new art for the future. I hereby would like to offer a small amount of donation and to entreat Your Excellency to build and manage the Art Museum. [Sawa 1925, 6]

This letter was followed by an interview at his house in Kyushu on 18 April, which confirmed his expectation for the Museum as one including a permanent display of renowned art objects (Saito 1987, 24–25). Moreover, the *Yomiuri Shinbun* (『読売新聞』; one of the major national broadsheets) on 31 May indicated Sato's vision of the new museum precisely as focusing on modern and contemporary arts:

> The front building has three floors including the basement. The third floor may consist of a VIP room and a permanent exhibitionary space collecting masterpieces of the Meiji and Taisho periods. [Sawa 1925, 69]

The discrepancy between the expectations of the donor Sato and of the campaigners

led by Councillor Koike was more evident in the different terms they used to describe the Art Museum. As I have already pointed out, Councillor Koike repeatedly called the Museum a gallery space for temporary art exhibitions or display. However, Sato called it "*josetsu bijutukan*" (「常設美術館」), literally meaning "permanent art museum", with more likeness to the European-style museums with collection and permanent exhibition and less implication of temporariness and commercial activities than its counterparts used by Councillor Koike.[10] Thus the donor had always expressed his preference for the museum with collection and permanent exhibition explicitly, and it was unlikely that the campaigners were completely unaware of it. They must have known what the donor expected for the new museum but chose not to take it.

The second source of the arguments for the Western-style art museum was contemporary art criticism. In 1925, when the Museum building was under construction, a leader of the *Chuo Bijutsu* (『中央美術』) journal expressed a wish to have a modern art museum, i.e. a museum with modern art collections (*Chuo Bijutsu* 11.6, 4). It suggested that the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum should spare a quarter of its space for "a permanent display of modern art" before an independent museum exclusively for modern art is built in the future. It was fully aware of the difference between the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum and the modern/contemporary art museums in European countries; in Japan, there was no exhibition space for the posthumous works of reputable painters such as Kano Hogai (see 4.4) and Kuroda Seiki (黒田清輝, 1866–1924). Then the article questioned the tendency to prioritise the interests of the art group exhibitions over

---

[10] The leader, by which he was inspired, used the same term, which he may have borrowed later.

the establishment of a permanent display space:

> Although I understand that a large number of groups which applied for the use of the Museum may mean no room for a permanent display at the corner of the Museum, it must be more significant, considering the benefit of the art world and the society, to make a permanent display even if some of the exhibits of minor art groups have to be refused. Moreover, it would not be a problem to remove that display once a year on the large-scale exhibitions which should occupy the whole building such as the Teiten. Some of the objects [of modern art] may have to be purchased, but a great number of the objects may be collected through deposition. [*Chuo Bijutsu* 11.6, 5]

In the year the Museum opened, Sakazaki Shizuka (坂崎坦, 1887–1978),[11] a leading art critic at the time, boldly stated that the Museum, unfortunately used as a "display gallery" ("*chinretsukan*" 「陳列館」), was a complete failure (Sakazaki 1982, 606). Two years after its opening, another critic, Sakai Seisui (坂井犀水), also maintained that the Museum could not be truly completed until it set up a permanent section: "It does not suit the name of Museum when it only rents its spaces and holds occasional exhibitions sponsored by the Metropolitan Government as it does now" (Sakai 1928a, 102). Then he suggested that the Ministry of Education and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government should purchase eminent contemporary works from the exhibitions of the Metropolitan Museum to form a collection for a new museum, separate from the Metropolitan Museum, to be devoted to its display (ibid., 103; 1928b). These criticisms of the "empty" Metropolitan Museum were associated with the continuing campaign for the establishment of the national museum of modern art (see 4.5). This campaign led by the Bunten artists, government officials, and journalists insisted on the establishment of a collection-based institution; and even after its crucial failure in 1919 there remained persistent voices maintaining the importance of collections

---

[11] See 5.3 for his biographical details.

and permanent galleries. However, these critical opinions did not develop into a substantial countermovement against the campaign led by the representatives of the art groups. They remained "minor" compared to the campaign group headed by Councillor Koike and failed to make any effect on the policies of the Metropolitan Museum.

Why did the Metropolitan Museum campaigners insist on establishing an empty institution? The no-collection policy adopted by the campaigners was closely related to their interests. The campaigning body mainly composed of the art groups had a specific, increasingly serious problem that had been troubling those groups for decades, for which they earnestly expected the new public museum would prove to be a long-awaited solution. The art groups desperately needed a permanent space for their regular temporary exhibitions. Indeed "the benefit of the nation" and "national pride" were often emphasised in their proposals and announcements. When there was no other public institution exclusively devoted to "art" ("*bijutsu*") – and especially the "new art" represented by three categories of the official art exhibition (Bunten/Teiten), the establishment of a public art museum in the capital city could be justly regarded as a grand national project. In comparison to other great nations and cities in the "world" (i.e. the West) which already had a number of public art museums, those statements typically argued that it would be a grave fault and disgrace for Japan, as one of the greatest nations in the world, and for Tokyo, as one of the greatest cities in the world, to have no such an institution.[12] Nevertheless, the campaigners did not follow such European models as the National Gallery (London) or the Louvre; the new museum in Tokyo was envisaged as a characteristically empty institution from the early stage of its planning. Although

its brick building adopting a Greco-Roman architectural style with wide entrance steps and ionic columns looked exactly like the neo-classical museum buildings common in European and American cities, its curatorial practices did not follow Western examples. To the art groups, the ultimate purpose for the establishment of the Art Museum was absolutely evident; it was to secure a permanent exhibition space for their exhibitions. The emergence of this unanimous aim may be understood by the circumstances in which the art groups found themselves as a consequence of their expansion in the previous decade.

Before the Metropolitan Art Museum was built, the only space especially devoted to art exhibitions was the Takenodai Exhibition Hall (Takenodai Chinretsukan [竹の台陳列館]). Its predecessor, the "5th Building" ("Go-gokan" 「五号館」), was built in Ueno in 1890 as a pavilion for the third Domestic Industrial Exposition.[13] After this event, it was handed over to the Imperial Museum along with several other buildings. The Meiji Art Association (Meiji Bijutsukai [明治美術会]), a group of Western-style artists, asked the Imperial Museum for the use of the 5th Building and succeeded in holding its spring exhibition there in March 1893. This first art exhibition in the remains of the exposition had to share the building with the commercial exposition of the Japan Fowl Association for a week, but since then many other art groups fell over one another to hold their exhibitions in this 5th Building.[14] When Metropolitan Government suggested demolishing this building for the Tokyo Industrial Exposition (Tokyo Kangyo Hakurankai [東京勧業博覧会]) in 1907, all the art groups co-operated to protest against the plan. As a result, the "2nd Building" ("Ni-gokan" 「二号館」) for the Tokyo Exposition was built

---

[12] For the examples of these statements, see Sawa 1925.
[13] See Footnote 23 in 4.3 for a brief definition of the Domestic Expositions.

to replace the 5th Building, and it was donated to the Imperial Museum so that it could rent the building to various art exhibitions. This building was called the Takenodai Exhibition Hall and had housed a number of art group exhibitions including the Japanese Salon (Bunten/Teiten) ever since.

However, by the beginning of the 1920s, the Takenodai had already fallen short of users' expectation. First of all, its potential disadvantages as a temporary building originally built for the industrial exposition revealed themselves over the years. It was little more than a shanty for the ephemeral event, which was completely unsuitable for long-term use, and by no means a purpose-built space for art exhibitions. Some areas of the building were too dark or too bright, and it took organisers a long time to prepare for exhibitions – carrying in and out the exhibits and setting up the galleries by covering up the cracked walls with curtains, etc. because of its architecture and inevitable decay. The proposal by the art groups dated 28 February 1921 suggested that the architectural style of the Takenodai would affect the creativity of artists by restricting the forms of art objects they produced to be exhibited there.[15]

Secondly, social circumstances had changed dramatically over the transitional period between the Meiji and Taisho eras, which a daily paper, *Tokyo Hibi Shinbun* (『東京日々新聞』), reported in 1921, made the Hall "too small" to serve its purpose.[16] This situation was caused by a combination of two factors; one was the increasing size of the audience and the other the increasing number of exhibitors. As regards the first point, new forms of leisure, including visiting exhibitions to appreciate works of art, had become increasingly popular by the beginning of the Taisho period

---

[14] See Furuta 1996, 45.
[15] See Sawa 1925, 13.

(mid-1910s). Councillor Koike mentioned that the visitors to the art exhibitions held in Tokyo in the past three years (1918 –20) numbered more than 600,000 a year in average.[17] The increasing popularity of the exhibitions before the establishment of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum is described as below:

> *Bijutsu* flourished as much as it had never done before. The increasing love for *bijutsu* objects which prevailed all over the country raised their prices as high as nobody in the past had ever imagined. Such *bijutsu* exhibitions as the Teiten, the Inten, and the Nika every autumn were places where the elder and the young, men and women, all gathered and where new *bijutsu*, if not old *bijutsu* [i.e. antiques], were displayed. The reputation of the maestri of artistic circles reached every corner of the country, and those exhibitions were thronged with visitors. In such circumstances, it had to be regarded as a mystery that the imperial capital had not yet had a single exhibition space for *bijutsu*. [Saito 1944, 257]

This phenomenon may be partly explained by the development of the capitalist economy stimulated by the Russo-Japan War (1904–05) and World War I which Japan entered in 1914. This supported the growth of a new middle class with secure income guaranteed by their white-collar jobs in the cities. In turn, they provided the social class for new forms of art consumption. In 1907, the Mitsukoshi Draper's Shop (Mitsukoshi Gofukuten [三越呉服店], the predecessor of the Mitsukoshi Department Store [三越百貨店]),[18] in Tokyo and Osaka started to deal in the original works of contemporary Japanese paintings at their new *bijutsu* section to cater for this new clientele. The Mitsukoshi successfully developed the

---

[16] See Sawa 1925, 77. The article is dated 3 July.

[17] See Koike's statement at the extraordinary session of the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly in Sawa 1925, 5 and the proposal dated 28 February 1921 in Sawa 1925, 11.

[18] In Japan, "draper's shops" ("*gofukuten*" 「呉服店」) originally meant shops dealing in fabrics for *kimono*, which were common in all big cities. However, they developed into Western-style department stores after the Meiji period. These stores include many famous establishments which now do business on a large scale, such as the Mitsukoshi, the Shirakiya (白木屋), the Daimaru (大丸), the Matsuzakaya (松坂屋), the Matsuya (松屋), the Sogo (そごう), and the Takashimaya

commercial exchanges between contemporary artists and the urban middle classes through its constant displays of art works and the occasional events, such as the Han Setsuga Kai (半切画会, 1910), organised in enthusiastic cooperation with the entire world of art groups. In 1914, the new annex of the Tokyo store was completed with an extended space for the *bijutsu* section. Other draper's shops/department stores soon followed the Mitsukoshi. In Osaka, the Sogo (そごう) and the Takashimaya (高島屋) both launched their *bijutsu* sections in 1919, and the Shirakiya (白木屋) in Tokyo in 1924.[19]

The second factor, the exhibitors, accelerated the overcrowded condition of the Takenodai. Most exhibitions there were organised by groups of artists who wished to display their works in the public space. Many invited public contributions to their exhibitions, made a selection, and awarded prizes according to the decision made by their hanging committees. This kind of practice could be recognised already in expositions in the late nineteenth century, but it was the Bunten, hosted by the Ministry of Education, in 1907 that established this system in the art exhibition. However, those who were not satisfied with its system and decisions began to organise their own exhibition groups, and most notably the 1920s was flooded with large and small, long-lived and short-lived, conservative and progressive art exhibitions. In 1925, a journal article counted as many as six exhibitions as the ones "established" (see 5.1). Of course, there were dozens of "unestablished" groups that expressed their principles by displaying their works in other exhibitions. They all played an important role in the diffusion of *bijutsu*, and the increased audience and exhibits created by the increasing number of artists

---

(高島屋). See Hatsuda 1999, 75–102.

[19] See Hatsuda 1999, 182–88.

became more and more difficult to be fitted into the limited space of the Takenodai. Moreover, it must be noted that most exhibitions were held in other spaces such as draper's shops, department stores, private galleries, and the spaces provided by newspaper publishers. Two months in the best season – October and November – were taken up by the Teiten for its preparation and exhibition, the Nika and the Inten occupied the Hall for a couple of months respectively before and after the Teiten, and the Shunyo Kai was held every spring. Then, there was hardly any time left for other minor groups to hold their exhibitions apart from humid summer and freezing winter. A journal article of the time stated that it expected these problems would be solved by the new public art museum, whose new architectural style would allow the exhibitors to shorten the time for their preparation and whose heating system would allow the exhibitors to utilise the galleries during the winter in a more pleasant environment (*Chuo Bijutsu* 11.6, 9).

Thus a permanent building exclusively to accommodate the increasing number and the expanding scale of art group exhibitions was a practical need for the groups of artists. However, it was not the only reason why the Museum was established and developed as "empty" as a result of the positive decisions of those groups. I believe that the principles which authorised the art groups and the power structure of the "art field" they formed were closely related to the emptiness of the Museum.

In the last chapter, I discussed how the art groups were associated with the *iemoto* system and how they transformed the official exhibition according to their power structure. I now examine how the unofficial groups replicated the system of power which materialised in the official sphere of the Bunten/Teiten and how those official and unofficial groups together formed a field of art based on principles different from those which, in Bourdieu's view, characterise the European art field.

5.3. Unofficial Art Groups and the *Iemoto* System

First, I discuss the characteristics of the unofficial (*zaiya*) art groups which developed since two artists' organisations were formed outside the Bunten in 1914 – the Japanese Academy of Art (Nihon Bijutsu In [日本美術院]) and the Nika Association (Nika Kai [二科会]). The separation of unofficial groups from the Bunten was a result of the intensification of the internal conflicts among the existing factions. As discussed in the last chapter, it was one of the main purposes of the official exhibition to integrate dozens of these conflicting groups, consisting mainly of artists, in the name of the nation and the Emperor. However, the disintegration of the Bunten had already started when it opened its first exhibition. The inaugural exhibition failed to include a part of the Old School artists, who were dissatisfied with the choice of the hanging committee members which they regarded as biased to the New School. Internal struggles including the one between the Old and New Schools in the section of Japanese-style painting had already been evident under the solidarity of the Japanese Salon; the Bunten was merely a compilation of independent groups with various artistic tendencies and no particular direction. Then, these struggles became more visible throughout the late 1910s and the 1920s as the increasing number of "*zaiya*" groups were formed by separating from the official exhibition.

These unofficial institutions were homologous in two respects: they mainly consisted of practising artists (both professionals and amateurs) rather than critics and other experts, and their main and often only activity was an exhibition which usually did not only display their own works but also invited public contributions and involved competition and awards. However, these groups were generally diverse in their size, influence, popularity, life span, purpose and actual function,

artistic style, and organisation. From the mid-1910s to the mid-1930s, many unofficial art groups which still exist today were established, including the Nika Association (1914), the Japanese Academy of Art (1914), the Kokuga Kai (国画会, 1918; then formally called "Kokuga Sosaku Kyokai" 「国画創作協会」), the Shunyo Kai (1922), and the Dokuritsu Bijutsu Kyokai (独立美術協会, 1930). It was also in these few decades that a series of distinctive currents of the avant-garde prospered, especially in the field of Western-style art. Directly and crudely influenced by various artistic and political tendencies prevalent in Europe after the turn of the century, Western-style artists – especially those who belonged to the Nika – formed a number of short-lived progressive groups which explicitly manifested their affinity to particular avant-garde movements including Futurism, Fauvism, Cubism, Expressionism, Dadaism, Constructivism, and Surrealism.[20]

In this section, though, my discussion focuses on the former, the "established" groups, for three reasons. Firstly, it was mainly those "established" groups that led the campaign for the founding of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum. The twenty-one groups which signed for the proposals presented to national and local governments included the Teiten, the Nika, the Japanese Academy, the Taiheiyo

---

[20] These art groups include: the Futurist Art Association (Miraiha Bijutsu Kyokai [未来派美術協会], 1920–22), the DSD (Dokuritsu Sakka Kyokai [独立作家協会], 1921), the Sanka Independent (Sanka Indipendento [三科インディペンデント], 1922), the Action (Akushon [アクション], 1922–23), the MAVO (MAVO [マヴォ], 1923), the Sanka Formative Art Association (Sanka Zokei Bijutsu Kyokai [三科造型美術協会], 1924–25), the Formative Art (Zokei [造型], 1925–27), the Utopia (Riso-kyo [理想郷], 1925), the Capital Art (Shuto Bijutsu [首都美術], 1924), the 1930 Association (1930-nen Kyokai [1930年協会], 1926–30), the Tan-i Sanka (単位三科, 1926), the Formative Art Association (Zokei Bijutsu Kyokai [造型美術協会], 1927–29), the National Association of Proletariat (Zenkoku Musansha Geijutsu Renmei [全国無産者芸術連盟], 1928–29), the Japanese League of Proletarian Artists (Nihon Puroretaria Bijutsuka Renmei [日本プロレタリア美術家連盟], 1929–34). For the details of the avant-garde movement through the mid-1910s and the mid-30s in Japan, see Nakamura 1981 and Takumi 1983.

Gakai (太平洋画会, 1901), and the Kofu Kai (光風会, 1912). The avant-garde groups were basically not involved in the establishment of the Metropolitan Museum; they were too ephemeral to organise such a campaign and too rebellious to cooperate with their "established" counterparts. Secondly, those longstanding groups of artists played an important role in the establishment and management of the post-war "empty museums". As I shall argue in this and the next chapters, these groups continued to manipulate the vacant galleries of the public art museums, and furthermore many newly-established groups of artists conformed to the structural characteristics developed by those existing organisations. Thirdly, it was precisely the established groups that differed most evidently from their Western counterparts. As Raymond Williams (1981, 68) points out, these groups such as the Futurists were characterised by their loose organisation, not based on formal membership, and their strong sense of sharing certain artistic tendencies or beliefs. The bonds of such groups usually last no more than a few years; they are rarely organised systematically to survive generation after generation. Williams classifies the public bodies organised for cultural production in Europe into three categories below:

(i) those based on *formal membership*, with varying modes of internal authority or decision, and of constitution and election;
(ii) those not based on formal membership, but organized around some *collective public manifestation*, such as an exhibition, a group press or periodical, or an explicit manifesto;
(iii) those not based on formal membership or any sustained collective public manifestation, but in which there is *conscious association or group identification*, either informally or occasionally manifested, or at times limited to immediate working or more general relations.

The organisations of artists in Europe belong to either of the latter two categories, and the first category includes the guild of artisans in medieval Europe. However, in marked contrast with modern European art groups, the established art groups in

Japan are distinct in their rigid organisation, formal membership, lack of a committed affinity to any particular artistic tendencies within a particular group, and longevity. In addition, the Japanese groups – especially the established ones – consist of both professional and amateur artists on different levels. In my opinion, moreover, these features of the established art groups prove that the Japanese groups were formed and developed to conform to the pre-modern convention of the *iemoto* system, peculiar to Japan and associated with the Emperor system. In the last chapter, I was concerned with the way the official exhibition was formed in relation to this *iemoto* system of the art groups in modern Japan. Now I examine how the unofficial art groups developed the characteristics associated with the pre-modern Japanese tradition which structured the official exhibition.

The best example of the unofficial art groups is the Japanese Academy of Art[21] which was one of the most influential groups later included in the Bunten and then became one of the first two groups formed outside the official exhibition. It was founded twice in its hundred-year history. Its first establishment was formed in 1898 by Okakura Tenshin (see 4.2 and 4.4), who was discharged as President of the Tokyo Art College, and the eminent members of the College who resigned with Okakura. It opened an institution of education and research in the district of Yanaka (谷中) in Tokyo and held the first exhibition in the same year. The Academy was recognised in its particular styles and techniques of Japanese-style painting as the New School in comparison to the other dominant power, the Old School. These two conflicting schools dominated the two classes which divided the category of Japanese-style painting in the Bunten, and the members of the Academy led "Class 2". The second generation of the Academy was established in

1914. The Academy had been virtually dissolved by then because of the severe criticisms of its styles and techniques in the Bunten and the deaths of its principal members including the leader, Okakura. However, the artists who belonged to the Academy and their followers left the Bunten to organise their own group and exhibition when they found that the Ministry of Education failed to appoint Yokoyama Taikan (横山大観, 1868–1958), an original member and leading figure of the Academy, as a member of the reorganised hanging committee.

The correlation between the *iemoto* system and the Academy was obvious from the very beginning of its first generation. Unlike the Bunten which had no consistent affinity to any particular artistic current, the Academy explicitly represented certain experimental styles and techniques of Japanese-style painting, especially those characterised by blurred contour ("*mokkotsu*" 「没骨」), which were developed by Okakura and his fellow artists. Nonetheless, the Academy was one of the factions in the Bunten which took advantage of the organisation of the official exhibition to enhance the *iemoto* system. As the most influential group in the New School of Japanese-style painting, it sent its *iemoto* masters such as Yokoyama Taikan and Shimoyama Kanzan (下山観山, 1873–1930) into the hanging committee, and it was actively involved in securing its authority among other *iemoto*-style groups so that as many works as possible from the Academy members and their disciples would be accepted by the official exhibition. The Academy boycotted the second Bunten exhibition (1908) because the number of its masters included in the hanging committee was considered insufficient, and the two class system was improvised to guarantee the Academy an organisation which would reserve a certain share of the gallery walls of the Bunten for the works of the masters and

---

[21] See Saito 1944 for the detailed history of the Japanese Academy of Art.

disciples of the Academy without annual political struggles with the Old School for supremacy in the official exhibition (1912). It was also due to the fact that the authority of a master was neglected that his comrades and disciples finally decided to leave the Bunten in 1914. In this year, the two class system was abolished and the integrated Japanese-style painting section excluded one of the most influential *iemoto* masters of the Academy, Yokoyama.

However, it was in its second generation that the Academy developed its association with the *iemoto* system more explicitly. Sato Doshin (1996, 197–202) points out the pseudo-blood relationship of the patriarchy of samurai society in the close unity of the revived Academy. He refers to the fact that the Academy was regarded as a family rather than a mere gathering to accomplish certain artistic and social purposes. It was apparent, for example, in a statement on the re-establishment of the Academy, in which Yokoyama described himself and his comrades as "brothers without a parent" (「親のないときの兄弟」). Okakura was compared to the father of Yokoyama's "brothers", and there is an ongoing custom that the members of the Academy would be enshrined with Okakura and other late senior members after their death. Furthermore, this patriarchal unity may be associated with the *iemoto* system which developed in relation to the feudal family system during the Edo period. I note that the late Okakura, the founder of the first Academy, was required to play an important part in the establishment of the second Academy more than a decade after his death. The fact that Yokoyama and Shimomura who had already established their reputations as the most influential masters in the New School set up their master, Okakura, as the central figure of the new group typically represented the worship of legitimacy which characterised the *iemoto* system. As I argued in the last chapter, various organisations

progressively defined their genealogy to authorise themselves (see 4.4). Yokoyama and Shimomura made use of their late master, Okakura, in order to claim legitimacy for their new group. They positioned themselves as heirs of the tradition derived in Okakura, the first *iemoto* master and the first Emperor of the Academy. Those two highly reputable artists authorised themselves and their art group not through their artistic talents and innovations but through the power of the *iemoto* tradition.

Among the established groups I listed above, both the Nika and the Kokuga associations originated in the factionalism of the Bunten exhibition. Like the Academy, their prototypes were the small groups of Bunten artists which were structured according to the *iemoto* system. When the *iemoto* masters of a faction found themselves marginalised in the official exhibition, they organised an independent body with their disciples. For example, the artists who later formed the Nika represented the New School of Western-style painting in the Bunten. The Old School was represented by the Hakuba Kai (白馬会, 1896) led by Kuroda Seiki (see 5.2), Dean of Western-style Painting Department at the Tokyo Art College. The New School artists including Yamashita Shintaro (山下新太郎, 1881–1966) and Fujishima Takeji (藤島武二, 1867–1943) were dissatisfied with the judgement of the Bunten, and they proposed the Ministry of Education to introduce the two class system – which had already been practised in Japanese-style painting – into the section of Western-style painting. However, it was rejected, and then a new group was established independent of the official exhibition in 1914. It was explicitly named, "Nika", meaning "Class 2". Moreover, some groups were separated from the established unofficial groups. The Shunyo Kai was formed in 1922 by the Western-style painters who belonged to the Western-style painting section of the

Japanese Academy of Art. This group did not protest against the artistic values embodied by the Academy by advocating any particular styles or techniques; on the contrary, it continued to promote the eclecticism of the Eastern and the Western styles as its parent organisation did. The separation of the Shunyo Kai from the Academy was based on frustrations occasioned by the fact that the Western-style painters were resigned to the second-class citizens in the Academy whose main focus was the innovation of Japanese-style painting.

The development of the *iemoto* system was the main factor in the longevity of these unofficial art groups. In contrast, the Western groups of artists were repeatedly formed and dissolved according to a series of artistic movements and trends which continued to prosper and decline one after another. These groups would rarely survive more than a few years, and the maintenance of the group traditions over generations was by no means their intention. Their movements and styles were destined to be located and evaluated in the evolutionary history of art; their avant-garde status is derived from a sense of ever-advancing and irreversible progress and a recognition that these groups of artists were positioned at the very end of the historical scale. According to Bourdieu (1996, 242–43), this characteristic of Western artist groups is associated with the historical "*cumulativity*" of the art field.

> Paradoxically, the presence of the specific past is most visible of all among the avant-garde producers who are controlled by the past when it comes to their intention to surpass it, an intention itself linked to a state of the history of the field. The reason the field has a directed and cumulative history is because the very intention of *surpassing* which properly defines the avant-garde is itself the result of a whole history, and because it is inevitably situated in relation to what it aims to surpass, that is, in relation to all the activities of surpassing which have occurred in the very structure of the field and in the space of possibles it imposes on new entrants.

However, Japanese art groups were based on a value system quite different to that of the avant-gardist, art-historical mode committed to pursuing the latest conceptions and styles. For the avant-gardist concept of history would prevent a group of artists from surviving generation after generation. For example, in the category of Western-style painting none of dozens of the avant-garde groups in the 1920s which were directly and closely associated with the trends in contemporary European art lasted long enough to be regarded as one of the "established" groups. By contrast, the Nika whose exhibitions were criticised as "a graveyard of Cézannism" (「セザニズムの墓場」) and the Shunyo Kai which had no particular artistic principle have survived more than seventy years and still open their annual exhibitions at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum every year. It was by recourse to the *iemoto* system that the longevity of those "established" groups was secured. The system composed of the absolute *iemoto* tradition and the disciples who supported, desired, and manipulated its authority was essential to the art groups becoming "well-established".

It was, then, not only because of their pressing concern about securing the gallery space that the art groups favoured no collection policy of the first public art museum. The longstanding tradition of the art groups based on the *iemoto* system would have been threatened by the emergence of the nexus of art history, curatorial authority, and permanent collections in the museum space. The structure of the *iemoto* system where even the absolute master is essentially obliged to protect the longstanding tradition would not allow any "evolution" of, or "innovation" in, artistic styles and techniques. Moreover, this is definitely one of the reasons why this system proves useful in retaining various forms of Japanese traditional arts today such as Kabuki play, tea ceremony, *sumo* wrestling, and *haiku* poetry. This

historical stasis of the *iemoto* system contradicted the evolving sense of history associated with the judgement of curatorial authority and its formation of permanent collections. The *iemoto* authority of the art groups detested the prospect that the absolute masters and masterpieces of a group might be made relative to those of other groups through the process of historicisation and internationalisation.

5.4. The Field of the Art Groups

This section examines how the art field consisting of official and unofficial art groups developed throughout the two decades after the first "unofficial" ("*zaiya*") groups were separated from the official exhibition in 1914. So far, I have shown how these groups of artists developed their organisations in relation to the *iemoto* system. Now I shift my attention to the world of art brought about by those groups and examine its power structure. By the mid-1920s, the Japanese Salon (Teiten) and dozens of *zaiya* groups, commonly structured according to the *iemoto* system, had already formed a sphere of art mediated by public exhibitions of the latest works of their members and new recruits. In the latter half of the 1910s, two other major groups were established by separating from the official exhibition,[22] and furthermore, early in the next decade, the first unofficial exhibition groups – the Academy and the Nika – also started to produce new groups such as the Shunyo Kai, a Western-style painting group separated from the Academy, and various short-lived avant-garde groups consisting of the artists from and/or against the

---

[22] These groups were the Kinrei-sha (金鈴社, 1916–22; Japanese-style painting) and the Kokuga Sosaku Kyokai (国画創作協会, 1918; Japanese-style painting).

Nika.[23] Thus the "unofficial" sphere of art had developed to a considerable extent by the mid 20s. Hence, the field of *bijutsu* consisted of both the official and the expanding "unofficial" art groups. I examine the characteristics of this field in comparison to the bourgeois public sphere in modern Europe. As I showed in Chapter 3 (3.2), the French Salon developed as a part of the bourgeois public sphere in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Japanese Salon, the Bunten, was meant to be an attempt to adopt the same system, but the Japanese counterpart did not develop in the same way as the European cases. The Japanese official exhibition in correlation with its expanding unofficial counterparts evolved a sphere of artistic production and consumption in its particular fashion associated with the Emperor system which, according to Maruyama, featured the structure of the whole society.

The sphere developed by the art groups bore some resemblances to the public sphere developed in Europe. The bourgeois public sphere, as "a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed" (Habermas 1974, 49), revealed two distinctive characteristics in the process of its development in relation to the Academy exhibitions in Europe (see 3.2). One was its anti-official property; the public opinion associated with the bourgeois sphere was formed in conflict with the public power of the state or of the monarchy. The other point concerned its close link with critical journalism – an institutionalised form of amateur art criticism. The development of the world of professional art criticism was an important part of the bourgeois public sphere. The Japanese art world significantly expanded by unofficial groups throughout the mid-1910s and the

---

[23] These avant-garde groups in the early 1920s included: the Futurist Art Association (1920–22), the Action (1922–23), the Sanka Independent (1922), the

mid-1930s revealed characteristics similar to these two conditions of the bourgeois public sphere. Firstly, it represented a sphere which conflicted with the state authority of the Bunten/Teiten exhibition. The unofficial groups were usually formed by the artists who left an established group, most typically the Bunten, because of their conflict with its authority. This is the reason why those new groups outside the Bunten were generally called, "*zaiya*" (「在野」), which literally indicated that they were unofficial oppositions outside the official authority of the Bunten. The first "anti-official" groups were the Japanese Academy of Art and the Nika, both separated from the official exhibition in 1914.[24] These *zaiya* groups of rebellious artists revealed an explicit anti-Bunten nature. This was most evident in the inaugural announcement made by the Academy in September 1914:

> Our art belongs not to the bureaucracy but to ourselves. It is neither the art of powerful schools and groups nor the art of copying the works of the masters. We shall restore the Japanese Academy of Art from this point of view and do our best to encourage the mood for the promotion of Japanese art. [Saito 1944, 222]

Needless to say, the art belonging to the bureaucracy and "the art of powerful schools and groups" refer to the art of the Bunten, and "the art of copying the works of the masters" indicates the traditional way of Japanese-style paintings still practised by the Old School painters. The Nika declared its position in its regulations: "This exhibition shall allow anybody to bring in one's own works as one pleases, but will refuse those who would exhibit their works at the Bunten exhibitions at the same time" (art. 2).[25] Moreover, both the Academy and the Nika showed their rivalry with the official exhibition by holding their first few annual

---

MAVO (1923), and the Zokei (1925–27). See Footnote 20 in the last section (5.3).

[24] Both the Academy and the Nika still remain the most influential art groups today.

[25] The regulations for the Nika exhibition in 1914, quoted in Takumi 1983, 35.

exhibitions deliberately at the same time as the Bunten.

Secondly, the growing criticisms of the official exhibition and the increasing number of unofficial groups were associated with the expansion of institutionalised critical journalism. According to James L. Huffman (1997), the newspaper press, another import from the West in Meiji, had already gained millions of readers especially in urban areas by the end of the Meiji era, and its essays and reports played important roles in a series of popular movements and rebellions. A number of critical journals specialising in art, literature, and culture were published regularly at the beginning of the twentieth century. Most major art journals in the pre-war period had already been published by the mid 1920s, including *Kokka* (『国華』, 1889), *Bijutsu Shinpo* (『美術新報』, 1902), *Mizuwe* (『みづゑ』, 1905), *Chuo Bijutsu* (『中央美術』, 1915), *Gendai Bijutsu* (『現代美術』, 1918), *Atlier* (『アトリエ』, 1924), and *Bijutsu Shinron* (『美術新論』, 1924). Art criticism was also taken up by general, literary, and academic journals such as *Subaru* (『スバル』, 1909) and *Shirakaba* (『白樺』, 1910). Among the already established national newspapers, the *Yomiuri Shinbun* (『読売新聞』, 1874) was reputed for its columns on literature and art. In these periodicals, the art group exhibitions were reviewed, the official exhibition was severely criticised, new artistic trends were introduced, and the present and the future of the art world were debated. Some publications were directly connected with particular art groups, such as *Nihon Bijutsu* (『日本美術』, 1898) and the Japanese Academy of Art. Moreover, it was at this time that art criticism came to be recognised as a profession. Most notably, Sakazaki Shizuka of the Waseda University[26] led the emerging world of art criticism and turned the university into one of the important bases of art critics in the first half of the

century. Some critics were related to particular artistic movements or art groups. For example, Sotoyama Usaburo（外山卯三郎）worked closely with such avant-gardist groups as the 1930-nen Kyokai (1930 年協会) and the Dokuritsu Bijutsu Kyokai (独立美術協会).

However, despite those analogies, the world of the art groups in early-twentieth-century Japan was not structured as part of a bourgeois public sphere. This is mainly because the unofficial sphere of the art groups failed to transform the structure of the official sphere; instead, as I discussed in the last section, it was constructed exactly in the same form as the official organisation. The bourgeois public sphere consists of debating individuals who would form their public opinion in conflict with the existing authority. What is important here is that this anti-official public does not intend to conform to the particular principle of the official sphere and to participate in the existing power struggles. The bourgeois public instead challenges the very principle that authorises the official sphere.

> Bourgeois public individuals are private individuals. As such, they do not "rule." Their claims to power *vis-à-vis* public authority were thus directed not against the concentration of power, which was to be "shared." Instead, their ideas infiltrated the very principle on which the existing power is based. To the principle of the existing power, the bourgeois public opposed the principle of supervision – that very principle which demands that proceedings be made public (*Publizität*). The principle of supervision is thus a means of transforming the nature of power, not merely one basis of legitimation exchanged for another. [Habermas 1974, 52]

This principle of "*Publizität*" is evident in the emergence of the *Kunstrichter* (art critic) in the course of the development of the bourgeois public sphere (see 3.2). The *Kunstrichter* did not simply take over the existing authority of the "gentleman

---

[26] See Footnote 8 in 5.2 for a profile of the University.

connoisseur"; the advent of this new profession was to transform the nature of power concerning the aesthetic judgement itself. Unlike the "judge" of art – such as the seventeenth-century connoisseurs – who represented invincible upper-class authority, his[27] expertise was constantly exposed to the challenges and oppositions of his professional colleagues and amateur readers. This principle may be most clearly symbolised by the following statement of La Font, a forerunner of the art critic: "A painting on exhibition is like a printed book seeing the day, a play performed on the stage – anyone has the right to judge it".[28] Accordingly, works of art were re-evaluated by the new principle of "*Publizität*" that the newly-rising body of the public applied in the course of the development of the Salon throughout the late-eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries in France. The Japanese unofficial sphere, however, did not attempt to transform the nature of power by introducing a new principle of power alternative to that of the existing authority. Instead, it consisted of organisations which explicitly intended to authorise themselves by the same principle of power as the official sphere. A group of artists demanded its share in the officialdom of the Bunten/Teiten, and, when its attempt failed, it established its own organisation whose principle of power was identical to the official sphere. The anti-official body would not question the power structure of the Bunten/Teiten itself; it did not attempt to reveal and reform the judgement system associated with the *iemoto* system when it protested against the official judgement. The "*zaiya*" group typically started a new quasi-*iemoto* school

---

[27] I am consciously specific about gender here, because of the exclusivity of the bourgeois public sphere which I have already discussed (3.2; 3.3).

[28] La Font, *Refléxions sur quelques causes de l'état présent de la peinture* [or,*Refléxions sur quelques causes de l'état de peinture en France avec un examen des principaux ouvrages exposés au Louvre le mois d'aoust 1746*], The Hague: 1747, quoted in Habermas 1989, 40.

according to a different artistic standard which would produce a result in the selection of exhibits different from that of its counterpart but according to the identical principle of power. Moreover, the consolidation of the *iemoto* system of the unofficial group commonly brought about a schism between the mainstream and the oppositions within the organisation, which caused a proliferation of the independent groups. Thus the unofficial sphere of art expanded dramatically between the mid-1910s and the early 1930s as a power structure homologous with that of the existing official sphere.

The sphere of the anti-official art groups thus developed not through their structural transformation of the official power but through their replication of the official power structure. This particular mode of the development of the unofficial sphere was associated with a broader context of the social dynamics specific to early-twentieth-century Japan. In eighteenth-century France, the established authorities of absolutism (church, princes, and nobility) were progressively dismantled in their conflict with the newly-rising bourgeois in the course of the reconstruction of the public sphere. According to Habermas (1974, 51), those authorities which were linked to the representative public sphere were "privatised" while retaining their public nature as part of the public institutions of the bourgeois nation-state. Religion became a private matter after the Reformation and religious freedom was secured as "historically the first area of private autonomy", while the church became one of many other public and legal bodies. The private expenses of the princely court were separated from the public budget of the state, and the public institutions traditionally related to princely authority (such as the bureaucracy and the military) became independent of the privatised sphere of the previous ruler. The nobility who were connected to the feudal estates were divided into those who

continued to be associated with public authority at parliament and the legal institutions and those who engaged themselves in private trades and professions. However, modern Japanese society consisted of the ancient religious and princely authority represented by the Emperor and the pre-modern authority of the samurai class who remained in the public sphere by being reorganised around the Emperor as a new form of nobility (*kazoku* [華族])[29] and bureaucracy. In this circumstance, religion (Shinto [神道]) and the princely court (the Imperial family, bureaucracy, and the nobility) remained absolutely "public matters" without being either partly privatised or restructured. In the Edo period, religious authority was linked to the Emperor, and political power was connected to the Tokugawa shogunate. However, the nation-state after the Meiji Restoration progressively unified them to concentrate them on the one and only nucleus of the Emperor.

Moreover, under the social structure associated with the Emperor system, any sphere fundamentally conflicting with the state power which was essentially connected to the Imperial power could not have emerged. Maruyama (1964) argues that a series of "antiestablishment" political movements after the Meiji Restoration proved to be dependent on the Emperor system themselves. A significant rise of liberal movements demanding democratic rights early in the Meiji period ("Jiyu

---

[29] *Kazoku* was introduced as a part of the class system in the Meiji era and abolished in the course of post-war democratisation in 1947. In the period of the Tokugawa shogunate, there was a rigid and well-respected social class system which consisted of four classes (which are, in hierarchical order, samurai warriors, farmers, craftsmen, and merchants) and outcastes. This system was abolished at the beginning of the Meiji, and the court nobles and the high-rank samurais in the Edo era were appointed the *kazoku* class in 1869. This new class system was developed according to European system of nobility in relation to the nation-state. In 1884, five titles of nobility (duke, marquis, count, viscount, baton) were introduced in the *kazoku*, and the eligibility for this privileged class was extended to politicians, servicemen, bureaucrats, and businessmen. For the details of the development of this social class, see Lebra 1992, Okubo 1993, and Sakamaki 1987.

minken undo"「自由民権運動」) or frequent attempts of coup d'état during the 1930s were both based on indisputable allegiance to the absolute power of the state (ibid., 14–15). [30] For instance, there was a famous attempt of coup d'état on 26 February 1936 (the 2·26 Jiken [2·26 事件]) which was carried out by a group of young officers. [31] This short-lived revolution occurred as a result of two parties conflicting inside the military authorities, but Maruyama maintains that these parties were both based on the ideology of imperial absolutism (ibid., 74–75). The antiestablishment group (Kodo-ha [皇道派]), described by the side of the establishment (Shin·tosei·ha [新統制派]) as contradicting the national polity, by no means denied the polity centred the divine Emperor; but, in fact, the Kodo·ha members strongly supported the nation and the Emperor. They only claimed their authority to get closer to the absolute Imperial power, and, in this sense, the conflict between these two parties represented a fractional dispute. Maruyama also refers to the para·Emperor system embodied in the organisations plotting such fascist revolutions. He identifies the characteristics of the Emperor system in the power structure of the right-wing groups and the established political parties, which he argues brought about a particular kind of totalitarianism which developed in Japan in a particular way (ibid., 84). In an analogous way, the conflicts between the official exhibition and the unofficial groups represented these political tensions based on the Emperor

---

[30] Sato (1996, 204) also makes this point specifically in relation to the characteristics of the *zaiya* groups developed in the Meiji/Taisho periods.

[31] Early in the morning on 26 February 1936, the young officers of the Kodo·ha group who plotted the national reform by force raided the prime minister's official residence, the Metropolitan Police Department, etc. and assassinated the Home Secretary, the Minister of Finance, and the Superintendent General of Education. They occupied the principal governmental institutions in Tokyo until they were suppressed on the next day. Most Kodo·ha officers were executed, and its opposition within military authorities – the Tosei·ha group increased its political power and developed the military totalitarian regime.

system. The unofficial art world could not separate itself completely from the official sphere in the sense that the unofficial groups did not deny the absolute power of the Emperor and, indeed, constructed their own group in identical fashion to the Emperor system dominating the official groups.

5.5. Conclusion

The characteristic emptiness of the first public art museum in Japan was thus related to the lack of interest in the historicisation of modern and contemporary art. This tendency in the field of the new art had always been evident since the Bunten did not function as an institution to employ the Western discipline of art history to designate contemporary classics. As I showed in the last chapter, while the pre-modern classics were progressively historicised in such institutions as the Imperial Museums and the Tokyo Art College from the beginning of the Meiji period, the contemporary works, most typically classified into three categories of the new form of art (Japanese-style painting, Western-style painting, and sculpture), remained unhistoricised and were left manipulated by the art groups and their *iemoto* system.

The *iemoto* system associated with the Emperor system was germane to this characteristic absence of the forms of historical consciousness associated with Western art history, curatorial authority, and permanent collections. It was not merely a question of securing a larger share of the gallery space at the Metropolitan Museum; the emergence of the nexus of art history, curatorial authority, and permanent collections in the museum space would have threatened the *iemoto* authority of the art groups. By the mid-1920s, the world of art – including the official exhibition and its counterparts – had developed by involving a number of art

groups organised under a number of *iemoto* masters. This situation specific to the Japanese art field brought about a particular condition where the works of art produced under such a system were not progressively located within a whole and coherent history of Japanese modern art. In principle, once a faction consisting of the absolute masters and their disciples separated from the official exhibition, their works would never be displayed with the works of the Bunten/Teiten artists. Moreover, once a new work was introduced to the public in an art group exhibition, it was rarely exhibited on any other occasion at any other time in the future. A journal article in 1931 states:

> It is almost impossible for ordinary art lovers to see the works from the exhibitions of the last-year or before ever again no matter how important those works are. They may be displayed occasionally at a one-man show or a collective exhibition of masterpieces; but these exhibitions are so rare and irregular that the art lovers could do nothing but wait humbly and patiently for such opportunities. [Kumamoto 1961 (*Gendai no me* 76)][32]

The lack of an opportunity to overview Japanese contemporary art due to the sectionalism of the art groups was well expressed by the high degree of excitement caused by the opening exhibition of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum in 1926. This special exhibition to celebrate the great achievement of a popular court nobility and politician in ancient Japan, Shotoku Taishi (聖徳太子, 574–622), was virtually the first "composite" art exhibition since the *Bunten* was split in 1914; the Teiten, the Inten, the Nika, the Shunyo Kai and other major schools exhibited together for the first time since their independence. During its opening period between 1 May and 10 June, the exhibition displayed 929 works of Japanese-style paintings, Western-style paintings, sculptures, and arts and crafts, which attracted

---

[32] The original article was "Yonbun-no-isseiki no waga bijutsukai to gendai-bijutsukan no yobo", *Binokuni*, February (1931).

64,116 visitors.[33] Although the selection of the works from each "established" body was left to its own direction, this exhibition allowed visitors to overview the contemporary works from different groups in one place. A contemporary critic, Sakazaki,[34] wrote in his annual review of the art exhibitions in 1926:

> The Bunten organised by government has lost its synthesis since its 8th exhibition in 1914, and the art world could not find a way to discontinue the situation of the rivalry of powerful institutions. Therefore, this exhibition was welcomed as really a precious event. [Sakazaki 1982, 606–607]

This composite exhibition was expected to continue every five years (Kumamoto 1960 [*Gendai no me* 68]); but no other was held after this first event. Some spasmodic efforts were made to develop a sense of unity and a sense of the historical whole in the sectionalised world of art groups. These large-scale, trans-group exhibitions were usually organised to celebrate historical occasions such as the fifth anniversary of the opening of the Metropolitan Museum (1935), the year 2,600 by the Japanese calendar (1940), and the birth of Crown Prince Akihito (the present Emperor; 1941).[35] Every time these exhibitions were held, the campaigners for the

---

[33] See Tokyo-to Bijutsukan 1975, 59.

[34] He is the same critic as I referred to in previous sections of this chapter (5.2; 5.4). See the latter for his short biography.

[35] The tenth anniversary of the Metropolitan Art Museum was celebrated by "Composite Exhibition of Contemporary Art to Commemorate the Tenth Anniversary" (「十周年記念現代綜合美術展覧会」) sponsored by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government in 1935, which exhibited 633 works from those displayed in the Museum in the past ten years (Kumamoto 1962 [*Gendai no me* 90]; Tokyo-to Bijutsukan 1955, 60–61). The composite exhibition of contemporary art to celebrate the 2,600th year by the Japanese calendar (「紀元二千六百年奉祝美術展覧会」) was held in 1940, sponsored by the Ministry of Education. The number of exhibits is unknown; but the event seems to have been exceptionally large-scale exhibition, involving most art groups and being divided into two terms of three weeks (Western-style paintings and sculptures in October, Japanese-style paintings and arts and crafts in November). In addition, a great number of works were purchased by the Ministry (Kaneko 2001, 59; Tokyo-to Kyoiku Iinkai c.1965, 15). For the commemoration of the birth of the Crown Prince, a national museum of modern art was planned; and a composite exhibition of more than 300 works of

establishment of the modern art museum were inspired to advance their demands. However, the Metropolitan Museum never developed these one-off exhibitions, and the long-term ambition of the museum campaigners remained unfulfilled.

The most established exhibitions transcending the group boundaries in the 1920s and 1930s were developed by department stores. At the beginning of this chapter (5.2), I briefly pointed out the relations between the art exhibitions and the department stores which evolved from draper's shops in the process of the Meiji modernisation. The department store was one of the most popular venues for the exhibitions of art groups before the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum was established, and it remained so even after the opening of the Museum. Furthermore, department stores not only rented out their gallery spaces for the art groups but also started to organised their own, "trans-group" exhibitions mainly for commercial purposes. The Mitsukoshi gathered six eminent Japanese-style painters to form a new exhibition group which exclusively served the department store, Tanko Kai (淡交会), in 1924.[36] This group consisted of the *iemoto* masters of two conflicting "established" groups – the Teiten and the Japan Academy of Art – whose works would never have been displayed at the same exhibition if it were not for this innovation. Most notably, Takeuchi Seiho (竹内栖鳳, 1864–1942) of the Teiten and Yokoyama Taikan of the Academy were on bad terms, openly slandering each other, and all the six members had never got together while their "group" exhibitions were held regularly.[37] Following the success of the Tanko Kai, the

---

Meiji art ("Great Exhibition of the Masterpieces of Meiji Art" 「明治美術名作大展示会」) was held in 1943 to prepare for the museum which had never been materialised (Kumamoto 1962 [*Gendai no me* 91]).

[36] The source of my discussion on the Tanko Kai below is Funato 1957.

[37] Other members included Yamamoto Shunkyo (山元春挙, 1871–1933; Teiten), Shimomura Kanzan (Academy), Kawai Gyokudo (川合玉堂, 1873–1957; Academy),

Mitsukoshi launched another mixed-group exhibition, the Shichigen Kai (七絃会), in 1930, and the Takashimaya, the most established store in Osaka, also organised its own group exhibitions in rivalry with its counterpart in Tokyo (Mitsukoshi). The department stores thus continued to provide contemporary works with the regular opportunities for mixed-group exhibitions while the Museum was ruled by the sectionalism of art groups. However, these trans-group attempts did not develop any articulate project of historicising modern/contemporary works of art. For the department stores focused almost exclusively on the *iemoto* artists whose reputation had already been established in the art group system; they were only interested in enhancing the already-acquired reputation of these artists and selling their works for the highest possible prices. The store managers had no intention of challenging these *iemoto* authorities by suggesting any value alternative to the existing system.

The issue of unhistoricised modern times will continue to be the focus of my discussion of the post-war museums in the next chapter. Historical perspectives remained undeveloped in Japanese modern art until a form of curatorial authority was introduced to the museum space as an officially recognised profession after World War II. For the first time in Japanese history, curatorial experts launched a comprehensive project of historicising post-Meiji Japanese art, set in prefectural art museums all over the country. Some collections of Japanese modern art had already been formed before the end of the war, and they were handed over to the post-war institutions. For instance, as I pointed out in the last chapter, the official exhibition, as a Japanese version of the Salon, was equipped with the policy to allow governmental purchase of some awarded works from this annual exhibition.

---

and Kobori Tomoto (小堀鞆音, 1864–1931).

Although this policy had been left abandoned for a while since the mid-1910s, it was resumed in 1932 and then continued. By the beginning of the 1930s, the governmental collection, though it was restricted to the Bunten/Teiten works, had accumulated a large number of works (Kumamoto 1962 [*Gendai no me* 87]). Nevertheless, these official works of art were neither historically studied nor classified, and consequently they were not selected to represent any historical meaning. Without space for their public exhibition, they were commonly either stored in the warehouses of the Ministry of Education or lent to governmental and public institutions for their decoration (Kumamoto 1961 [*Gendai no me* 77]; 1962 [*Gendai no me* 87]). After World War II, as I argue in the next chapter, this historical void would develop a new kind of empty institution, which was not directly associated with the art groups and their *iemoto* system.

The correlation between the art groups and the empty museums would be sustained in post-war Japan as a phenomenon characteristic of the development of public art museums. The art groups that revived after they were forced to dissolve during the war would retain their *iemoto* system and would become as prosperous as they had never been before. The art world in post-war Japan thus would evolve in relation to two distinct kinds of art specialists in the museum space – the art group and the curator (*gakugei-in* [学芸員]; see Chapter 2). The art group survived the war-time hardships and the post-war "westernisation" programme initiated by the occupation army and inherited by the first "democratic", "liberal" government in Japanese history. The Metropolitan Museum accommodated more art group exhibitions than ever, and these groups continued to be influential in the art world. The curator was a new profession, introduced for the first time into art museums in post-war Japan. Although its development as curatorial authority modelled on the

Western practices, the *gakugei-in* assumed some distinct characters in the process of its interactions with the conditions specific to contemporary Japan – including the art group.

Chapter 6

Post-war Empty Museums before the Boom and the Development of Curatorial Authority

6.1. Introduction

This chapter and the next focus on the public art museums in post-war Japan. Before coming to the post-war period, a few words on the wartime period are in order. This is the period when Japan indulged in imperialistic aggressions in Asia and the Pacific under a political regime rapidly turning into totalitarianism: its invasion of Manchuria (Manchurian Incident, 1931) and the Pacific War (1941–45) are key moments. Below I make three points concerning the wartime development of Japanese public art museums. These points indicate that the development of the public art museum in this period has few significant consequences for the post-war development of the empty museums and also justify my decision against discussing the wartime situation in an independent chapter.

First, there were only a few cases of new institutions during this period, and none of them developed to historicise the contemporary/modern art of Japan. Two public art museums were built in the early 1930s – the Kyoto Art Museum for the Commemoration of the Imperial Occasion (Kyoto Tairei Kinen Bijutsukan [京都大礼記念美術館], currently called the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art [京都市美術館]) and the Osaka Municipal Museum of Art (Osaka-shiritsu Bijutsukan [大阪市立美術館]). Unlike the Metropolitan Museum, they both held collections and were equipped with permanent exhibition spaces as well as temporary galleries for art group exhibitions. The collections and permanent displays of the latter were

predominantly antiques (Yagyu 1957, 94), but the former clearly focused on the "modern" art objects produced after the year the Bunten opened (1907).[1] This would mean that the ideal institution of the modern art museum campaigners was finally embodied; the Kyoto Museum started to organise occasional exhibitions of its modern-art collections in 1935 and set up permanent galleries in 1940 (Kumamoto 1960 [*Gendai no me* 70]). However, this unprecedented institution was a local and isolated case. The Museum's curatorial practices were not followed by any other institution, and they did not accomplish the large-scale project of historicising modern Japanese art. The Bunten/Teiten collections in Tokyo remained intact for another decade until the War ended.

Second, the art groups and their exhibitions remained the most influential force in the public museum spaces until just before the end of the war in spite of increasing interference and censorship of their activities by government. Even after the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941, nearly 60 art group exhibitions attracting as many as 900,000 visitors were still held at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum every year. Then, as the War was underway and many artists were sent to the front with the army both as soldiers and war artists, there was a dramatic drop in the number of exhibitions and visitors in 1944 (40 exhibitions and 120,000 visitors; see Figure 6.1). Finally, in the next year, art group exhibitions were totally banned by the order of military headquarters, and the groups were dissolved. When the art groups evacuated the museum galleries, the art world that had been evolving in the empty museums during the 1930s was virtually lost. The War ended before the wartime authority managed to establish any alternative to the

---

[1] This policy is declared in the management principles, quoted in Kumamoto 1960 [*Gendai no me* 70]).

world of art groups. After only two explicitly military propaganda exhibitions, the building of the Metropolitan Museum was commandeered by the army as its warehouse; and after no more than a few months Japan surrendered.

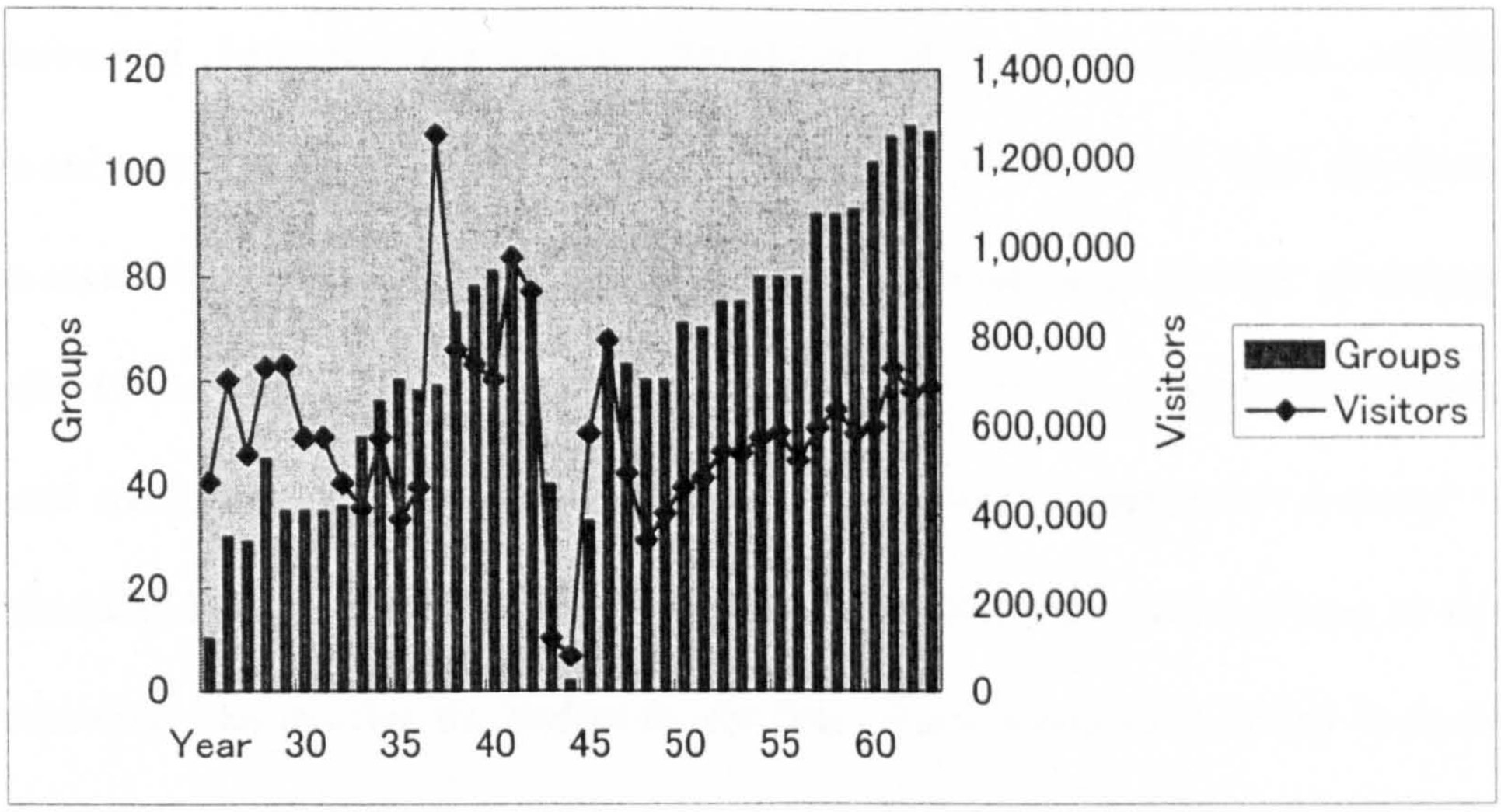

Figure 6.1: Art Groups and Visitors of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (1926–64)

(Source: Tokyo-to Kyoiku Iinkai c.1965, 16)

Third, the *iemoto* tradition of the art groups and the art field remained intact. In the last two chapters, I discussed how the *iemoto* system traditionally associated with the pre-modern practice of Japanese art developed in the modern groups of artists and their art world. Throughout the 1930s and the early 40s, the power structure of their art world did not change dramatically, consisting of the "official" exhibition (the Teiten, which confusingly resurrected its old name, the Bunten, in 1936) and a number of "*zaiya*" groups (both "established" and ephemeral). They were eventually forced to dissolve in 1945; but they were resurrected soon after the War in a form almost identical to what they had been before their compulsory disorganisation.

Now my focus moves on to the post-war development of public art museums, which includes the period described as the "museum boom". The art field that, as

we have seen, had long been dominated by the art groups receives a new agent – the curator (*gakugei-in* [学芸員]), who plays an important role in the establishment and transformation of the art museums in post-war Japan. In the last two chapters, I discussed how the art groups developed in the heterogeneous conditions of contemporary Japan since the late nineteenth century and how the first empty museum was established exclusively for the use of these groups of artists in the mid-1920s. In relation to the *iemoto* system of the art groups and other political and social circumstances, any curatorial authority informed by common Western practices based on art history did not develop in the art world evolving in the empty museum. Soon after the defeat in the War, the art groups that had been dissolved by the wartime military government were revived almost exactly in their pre-war form, and curators were introduced to the public art museum as officially-licensed residents in the world of art and the museum for the first time. Accordingly, my following discussion is concerned with the new dynamics of the art field that was formed by the power struggles of the two interest groups associated with the post-war museum space – the art groups and curators. It has already been shown in the last two chapters that the art group was a hybrid of modern Western artistic practices and the Japanese *iemoto* tradition. In this and the next chapter, I argue that, while the art groups continued to transform in relation to the socio-cultural context of contemporary Japan, the role of the curator also developed as part of a transculturation process affected by the peculiarity of the socio-cultural context of post-war Japan. The position of curator was certainly modelled on the Western profession, concerned with avant-gardist art history and professionalism; but it should by no means be regarded, from within the perspective of my argument, as the

complete embodiment of the Western model at any stage of its development. The Japanese curator – *gakugei-in* – occupied a unique position in the Japanese art field in relation to other agencies of the field – particularly the art group.

I divide the post-war period in two in the late 1960s. This chapter covers the pre-boom period before the late 1960s, and the next covers the museum boom (1970s–80s). In this chapter, I focus on the pre-boom period when the curator was introduced as a specialised profession to the museum space which had hitherto been monopolised by art groups; the interactions between these experts of the art museum began, and a new kind of empty museum developed. Since I have already commented in detail on "art groups" and their art world evolving in the empty museums in the last chapter, my main concern now is to examine the emergence of a new form of profession associated with the curatorial practices prevalent in the West – especially those informed by art history. In the pre-war and wartime public art museums, curatorial specialists did not develop because these institutions, including the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, were dominated by the art groups whose power structure, associated with the pre-modern *iemoto* system, conflicted with the conception of art history. This new professional group inside the public art museum was closely related to the development of a new form of empty museum, which was markedly distinguished from the Metropolitan Museum type. I discuss one institution of each type of the empty museums in the 1950s: the Aichi Prefectural Art Museum (Aichi-kenritsu Bijutsukan [愛知県立美術館], 1955) as the first post-war institution following the Metropolitan Museum tradition, and the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (Kanagawa-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan [神奈川県立近代美術館], 1951) as the pioneer of the new type that

developed a new kind of emptiness. They were both "empty" in the sense that they had no substantial collections and were not equipped with permanent exhibition spaces. However, while the former's emptiness was associated with the laws and structure of the world of the art groups, the latter's was uniquely developed as a result of the curators' efforts to operationalise the Western-style model of an institution sufficiently equipped with collections, permanent displays, and curatorial authority.

The transcultural process through which these museums developed from the 1950s onwards is a result not so much of relatively direct contacts between Japanese and Western cultures as of the interactions between agencies within the Japanese cultural field which themselves were already a result of transculturation. Nonetheless, the perspective of transculturation remains relevant and important in my analysis in this chapter. The dichotomy of the "dominant West" and "subordinate Japan", which supported the "modernisation" and "culturalisation" programmes after the Meiji Restoration, was reaffirmed in the process of the comprehensive reconstruction of Japan after World War II. The reconstruction programme of post-war Japan was conducted by occupation forces, the GHQ (General Headquarter), led by the United States, until the San Francisco Peace Treaty approved the independence of Japan in September 1951. For the first time in Japanese history, the country was under the control of a foreign power. In these circumstances, Japan experienced the second tide of programmes aiming at the exhaustive transformation of its society, politics, and culture through progressive "westernisation" policies – especially those focused on "democratisation" and

"culturalisation" as a means of dismantling Japan's "totalitarian" wartime regime.[2] As we have seen in Chapter 2, as far as the empty museum critique was concerned, the post-war museum development was considered and criticised as a part of this "westernisation" process. According to this viewpoint, both the Aichi and the Kanagawa Museums are regarded as yet more institutions that simply "failed" to realise the Western model. In contrast, my investigation in this chapter relocates the development of these two museums in the broader historical process of "transculturation". They were both established in relation to the particular socio-cultural context of post-war Japan and the more specific, local circumstances of the prefectural art world. Moreover, they were two exceptional cases in the post-war museum development, which developed two distinct types of empty museum – the one which followed the Metropolitan Museum tradition associated with the art groups and the new type of "empty" institution associated with the curators' leadership. Their further development indicated the incessant confrontations and negotiations between the art groups and the curators over the use of the museum space, and it was by these interactions between these two interest groups that the post-war development of public art museums was most aptly characterised.

6.2. The Revival of Art Groups

The pre-war "empty" museums developed essentially in close relation to the art groups including the official exhibition (Bunten, Teiten) and many unofficial "*zaiya*" organisations. The art groups survived the post-war reconstruction of

---

[2] For general accounts of post-war Japanese society, see Beasley 1995; Hunter 1989.

Japanese social structure and flourished as never before throughout the latter half of the twentieth century. Therefore, it will be important to begin my discussion of the post-war establishment of empty museums with an investigation of the post-war art groups and their characteristics. In the latter half of 1944, any group exhibition except the Bunten and the one organised by the Japan Patriotic Art Association (Bihoten [日本美術報国会展覧会]) was made impossible by military authorities and the art groups were compelled to disband. However, it took no more than a few years after the end of the war before most major art groups resumed their regular exhibitions at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum. In 1946, 33 groups including the Nitten (the reorganised Bunten), the Nika, and the Kokuga Kai held their exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum, and their number doubled in the next year by including the revived Shunyo Kai.[3]

Many pre-war "established" groups reformed under the same names, while other new groups were also being propagated. Does this mean that their structure, as we have seen associated with the *iemoto* system, was not influenced at all by the drastic project of social reform conducted by the occupation army? Japan after the end of World War II experienced rapid and comprehensive transformations in culture and society parallel to, or even exceeding, the dramatic changes after the Meiji Restoration in the late nineteenth century. On 15 August 1945, the infallible Emperor acknowledged defeat on the radio with his own voice which had never been heard by the nation before. Then, the occupation army led by Douglas MacArthur

---

[3] In addition, new groups already started to be derived from the revived major groups; both the Kodo Bijutsu Kyokai (行動美術協会, 1945) and the Niki Kai (二紀会, 1947) branched off from the Nika, and the Shigen Kai (示現会, 1947) was formed by a group of artists separated from the Taiheiyo Gakai (太平洋画会; now called "the Taiheiyo Bijutsukai"「太平洋美術会」).

(Commander-in-chief of the GHQ in Japan between 1945–51) undertook a comprehensive programme of "democratisation" and "modernisation". Did this programme have any impact on the post-war art groups?

The post-war groups were identical in many ways to their predecessors. As far as their associations with the *iemoto* system were concerned, their character remained virtually intact. Perhaps the most significant result the post-war reform achieved was the privatisation of the official exhibition. This privatisation process had two stages. The first stage was conducted by the occupation forces in the late 1940s. The exhibition sponsored by the Ministry of Education was resumed in 1946, but the American authorities decided to withdraw the governmental budget completely from the exhibition in 1948 as a part of their "democratisation" programme. Effectively, it became a private exhibition sponsored by the Japan Academy of Arts (Nihon Geijutsu In [日本芸術院])[4], the Nitten (Nihon Geijutsu In Bijutsu Tenrankai [日本芸術院美術展覧会]).[5] The second stage occurred in 1958. This reform was triggered by a controversial speech at the Committee on Education

---

[4] Note that this organisation is different from the Japanese Academy of Art (Nihon Bijutsu In [日本美術院]), one of the oldest and most influential "*zaiya*" art groups. The Japan Academy of Arts originated in the Imperial Academy of Fine Art (Teikoku Bijutsu In [帝国美術院], 1919) which sponsored the official exhibition (then called the Bunten) until the Ministry of Education recovered its direction in 1936. The Academy expanded into the Imperial Academy of Arts (Teikoku Geijutsu In [帝国芸術院], 1923) which included literature and music as well as fine art. Then, it was renamed as the "Japan" ("Nihon") Academy of Arts in 1947.

[5] The official exhibition had been called "Bunten" again since 1936, when its sponsorship returned from the Imperial Academy of Arts to the Ministry of Education. Then, when it resurrected in 1946, it was renamed as "Nitten" (The Exhibition of Japanese Art Sponsored by the Ministry of Education; Monbusho Shusai Nihon Bijutsu Tenrankai [文部省主催日本美術展覧会]) while its sponsorship remained with the educational ministry; and finally it became privatised as the Exhibition of the Japanese Academy of Arts (Nihon Geijutsu In Bijutsu Tenrankai [日本芸術院美術展覧会]) while its name remained the same "Nitten" by the confusing coincidence that the abbreviation of the formal names of these two exhibitions happened to be the same.

of the National Diet made by an MP for the Socialist Party, Takatsu Masamichi (高津正道) in July 1957. He accused the Nitten, its organiser (the Japanese Academy of Art), and the Ministry of Education for their continuing, allegedly corrupted, mutual dependency even after the first privatisation of the Nitten.[6] As a consequence, the Nitten was reorganised once again; the Academy's Nitten exhibition ended in the next year, and it became an annual exhibition sponsored by its own steering committee. One journal article in 1957 writes that this scandal succeeded finally in stripping the Nitten of its disguise as an official exhibition kept up by the sponsorship of the semi-official Academy and that the Nitten was degraded to just another unofficial art group (*Geijutsu Shincho* 8.10, 181–82). Nonetheless, the privatisation of the Nitten had no affect on the *iemoto* structure of the ex-official exhibition and other art groups.

The revived art groups represented many characteristics of their predecessors. First, they retained the teacher-disciple relations based on the *iemoto* system. Each group had its own absolute tradition – containing generations of eminent figures ("*iemoto* masters"), around whom the hierarchy of its existing members was formed. For example, Nishiyama (1982b) discusses this *iemoto* system associated with the post-war art groups by quoting a comment of a leading journalist in post-war Japan, Oya Soichi (大宅壮一, 1900–70), in the 1950s. Oyake describes the *iemoto* characters developed by the revived Nika Kai as follows:

---

[6] This speech of Takatsu is called "Takatsu hatsugen" (「高津発言」), to which most writings concerning Japanese art history in the 1950s make reference. For a contemporary account of the "Takatsu hatsugen" and its consequences, see *Geijutsu Shincho* 8.9.

"The members of the Nika outside Tokyo are compared to "*natori*" [「名取り」] – the minor masters licensed by the grand *iemoto*, and they form small *iemoto* groups such as the "Churchill Group" or "Duck Group". The regional exhibitions of the Nika are sponsored by these groups, but their hanging committees are dominated by the grand masters from the headquarter including Togo Seiji [東郷青児, 1897–1978]. Just like *ikebana* [flower arrangement] exhibitions, these exhibitions would accept almost *any* works of the disciples who have regularly paid monthly fees for lessons to their regional masters; if the quality of a work is too poor, the master would polish it up to make it acceptable. Now, after the perfunctory committee meetings, the regional masters and their disciples would take good care of the grand masters by entertaining them and offering gifts. Moreover, the regional members have to find good buyers for the works of the central *iemotos* among the local rich. For it is according to these "skills" that a "*natori* master" is evaluated by the grand masters. Then, this evaluation determines the "share" of the "*natori* master" – how many works of their disciples may be accepted by the Nika Exhibition which is held in every autumn in Ueno [i.e. the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum]". [296]

Second, the major post-war groups lacked any artistic creed to be shared among their members. The so-called "*zaiya*" groups early in the twentieth century multiplied originally because they held different creative beliefs from other members of the "established" groups – most typically the official exhibition; but their aggressive and vigorous creativity gave way to the stasis of artistic styles and the concerns with the maintenance of their authority as they became well-established (see 5.3). This situation did not change at all after the War as many contemporary critics pointed out[7]; it could not have changed because these revived groups had nothing to do with any defiant spirit or contemporary artistic movement in the first place.

Third, their political conflicts were staged in the same institution – the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum – and evolved exactly in the same fashion as before. The political nature of the art groups had always been most evident in their conflict over

---

7: See Hijikata 1960, 2; Ito 1957, 244; the statements of Imaizumi and Yoshii in *Atelier* 283, 68; Ihara's statements in Nakamura, et al. 1954, 217–19.

the gallery walls; their main concern was to keep enough space for their exhibitions preferably at the best time of the year (spring or autumn) at the museum building. Holding an exhibition at this first art museum in Japan itself was a status symbol for these art groups in relation to other groups, and the scale of their exhibitions – with the galleries overflowing with a number of paintings and sculptures – represented their power. In order to keep up appearances and to make both ends meet, the art groups attracted more contributors (who paid entrance fees) and produced more winners who required more space. This mechanism of the art exhibition was inherited by the post-war exhibitions organised by both old and new art groups. In the 1950s, there were 80 groups fortunate enough to be granted a share of the prestigious museum space. This figure marks the second largest in the thirty-year history of the museum; but the number of exhibits in each group exhibition also increased dramatically. A journal article in 1957 sarcastically commented:

> If one art group truly discovers more than fifty "promising" new talents, Japan would be exactly "the country of fine art". However, you must not jump to such a conclusion. You should consider the mechanism of such a competitive exhibition whose finance is mostly dependent on the examination fee collected from public contributors. Therefore, in other words, these public contributors who bring their works to be examined are "customers", and, if it were not for these customers, the art groups could not make their living. [*Geijutsu Shincho* 8.10, 163]

Each exhibition was an annual festival for each group to represent its power just as it was for each "established" group in the 1920s and 1930s. It was even more so after the War since the artistic creeds which initially bonded the members of art groups had already faded away when the groups were re-united. The art group exhibition was no longer a place for artistic statements against the established groups including the Nitten or for public judgement.

> Regarding *bijutsu* [fine art], each annual exhibition must attract an audience though it is restricted to only a few big cities including Tokyo. However, it is like the Star Festival which takes place annually to celebrate two lovers separated by the Milky Way in the sky meeting up once a year. In addition, most audiences cannot stay calm in the galleries; they would look around as if they were looking at chrysanthemum dolls.[8] For each painter, he/she cannot tell how much his/her works are appreciated even if the group seems popular. [Uemura, et al. 1953, 35]

The Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum held "the Artists' Festival" on a large scale in the 1950s in order to attract a larger audience; the festival invited Metropolitan officials and included a show by artists and female professional wrestlers. This was also the case with the art group exhibitions at provincial museums. In Nagoya, where the Aichi Prefectural Art Museum was located, the management of the exhibition had to depend more on the ticket sales than the one in Tokyo, because no subsidy was available from the head office of the art group. Then, the sponsoring group would make greater efforts to attract general audience, which would turn the exhibition into more commercially profitable "festivities".[9]

The newly-established groups such as the Kodo Bijutsu Kyokai (行動美術協会), the Niki Kai (二紀会), and the Shigen Kai (示現会) revealed these characteristics of the revived major groups. Although they were separated from their parental institutions, their artistic principles were ambiguous from the very beginning as the Shunyo Kai was (see 5.3). Their inaugural statements did not refer to their support to any particular styles or movements associated with art history. The

---

[8] The chrysanthemum doll is the main attraction of the annual chrysanthemum festival held in autumn all over Japan. It is usually a historic figure whose dress is made of hundreds of chrysanthemum flowers in different colours. The author's image here is based on a common knowledge that the festival is usually packed with a number of people. Especially, so many people gather to see the dolls that they are not allowed to stop in front of the figures; they are forced to keep on moving forward with the crowd.

[9] See Okada's statement in Okada, et al. 1959, 5.

novelty they maintained had nothing to do with the novelty in the evolutionary development of art. Some groups may persist in "representational painting" (the Shigen Kai) and some may intend to abolish the boundaries of the established "schools" – i.e. "*ryuha*" (the Kodo Bijutsu Kyokai and the Niki Kai); but these groups still survive today after more than half a century. Moreover, these relatively minor groups were compelled to get involved in the *iemoto* system of the revived art world. These groups were not yet substantial enough to challenge these rules of the Metropolitan Museum. Consequently, they were placed at a disadvantage. In order to survive the life-or-death game, many of them had to accept most works – in some cases, all the works – entered for their exhibitions (*Geijutsu Shincho* 8.11, 278).

The art world in post-war Japan thus reconstructed the pre-war model based on the *iemoto* system of the art groups. Its pre-modern characteristics were by no means subdued by the introduction of democratic political and social systems and the old-fashioned art groups by no means declined. The Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum housed more group exhibitions than ever, and the scale of the exhibitions and the groups became larger and larger. In relation to Bourdieu's model of the art field, one particular change brought about by the growing number and size of the art groups should be noted. It is the fact that they actively accepted more and more amateur artists in their post-war development. The *iemoto* system originally developed in relation to the amateur practices of Japanese traditional cultural skills. Nishiyama (1982a, 534–45) identifies the three stages in the process of the development of the *iemoto* system between the early seventeenth century and the early nineteenth century. At the first stage (from the 1620s to the early eighteenth

century), this system was associated with the cultural practices of the samurai class – the leading class of the feudal society of the Edo period – who not only assimilated the artistic skills and tastes of the court culture but also transformed their own professional, practical skills of military arts into more formalistic and artistic practices for their pastime as the samurai regime under the Tokugawa shogunate became stabilised. At the second stage (the early to mid eighteenth century) and the third stage (the late eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century), the growing number of urban middle classes became more important as principal members of the *iemoto* schools. The disciples of these schools were mainly "middle-class amateurs", who "took pleasure in conducting tea ceremonies, arranging flowers, and smelling incense but did not practise them seriously as their own professions" (ibid., 541). Accordingly, the art groups that were closely related to the *iemoto* system had always consisted of amateur artists as well as those who were professionally motivated. This amateurism intensified in the post-war development of these groups. In the 1950s, dozens of them held their exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum every year, displaying hundreds of works of their members. It was simply impossible for all those "artists" to make their living by their artistic skills; the expansion of each group involved an increasing number of "new recruits" from the growing population of middle-class amateurs. This phenomenon of the increasing number of amateur members is in contradistinction to the process of "autonomisation" which characterised the development of the Western art field. For the "constitution of a socially distinguishable category of professional artists" was one of the most important components of this autonomisation process (Bourdieu 1993, 112).

This further amateurisation of the art groups was related to two factors threatening their prosperity in the post-war art field. The first factor is a combination of the sharp increase in the number of art groups and the overall downturn in public support for their exhibitions. According to a contemporary source, there were around 150 art groups in Tokyo in 1957 (Takahashi 1957, 183), only half of which were able to hold their exhibitions at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum. These groups had to share the limited number of art lovers, who were not enough to support so many exhibitions. Figure 6.1 clearly shows this hardship for the increasing number of art groups. In the 1950s, the numbers of visitors to the Metropolitan Museum remained at the same level as they were in the early years of the Museum, whereas the number of art groups doubled.

The second factor was the development of powerful rivals to the art groups – department stores, newspaper publishing companies, and curators.[10] Until the end of the War, "art exhibitions" predominantly meant "art group exhibitions". However, post-war exhibitions became tremendously diversified as other sponsors and organisers got more involved in the exhibition business. The three "rivals" conflicted with the art groups by vying for their share of visitors. Also these newly-developing exhibitions were a threat to the value system of the art group exhibitions because of their cross-boundary and historical perspectives. As I discussed in the last chapter, the department store has developed as one of the most important venues for art exhibitions since the Meiji period. It provided the growing number of art groups with their exhibition spaces when these groups had to struggle for the limited museum galleries of the public art museums. The

---

[10] For the development of the department store exhibitions, see 4.1 and 4.5. Curators and the exhibitions they organised will be discussed in 6.3.

department store also organised "trans-group exhibitions" for commercial purposes, inviting great contemporary masters from various art groups. After the War, however, while still displaying art group works, they began to organise exhibitions not directly related to contemporary artists belonging to the art groups.[11] These usually one-off, large-scale exhibitions proved to be so popular among the general public that they began to threaten the dominance of the art group exhibition in the art field. They included a wide range of exhibits – from Japanese antiques, European art, contemporary photography, to animals, flowers, and foods; but the most favourite exhibition of the post-war department stores was that of the cultural heritage of Japan.

The newspaper publishing companies also had a long history of sponsoring art exhibitions since the beginning of the Showa era (1926–89). While financially supporting art group exhibitions, the publishers of national and local newspapers themselves developed trans-group, art-historical, large-scale exhibitions similar to those of the department stores. These exhibitions were usually held either at the rental galleries of art museums (including the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum) or at the department stores which co-sponsored the events. One of the earliest examples was "Masterpieces of Meiji and Taisho" ("Meiji Taisho Meiga Meisaku Tenrankai"「明治大正名画名作展覧会」) held at the Metropolitan Museum in June, 1927. This event, sponsored by one of the largest broadsheets, the Asahi Shinbun (朝日新聞), displayed more than 350 masterpieces of the past 60 years in systematic and chronological order (Kumamoto 1960 [*Gendai no me* 68]). This custom developed throughout the 1930s and continued after the War; for instance, the

---

[11] My discussion of the post-war department-store exhibitions below is based on Katsumi 1956 and Makita 1957.

Mainichi Shinbun (毎日新聞) sponsored a combined exhibition of twelve established art groups at the Metropolitan Museum in 1947 ("Bijutsu-dantai Rengo-ten"「美術団体連合展」). Furthermore, some of the newspaper-sponsored exhibitions became influential and more explicitly "anti-art-group" as they were held on the regular basis. For example, the annual exhibition of the Yomiuri Indépendant (読売アンデパンダン), launched in 1949, protested against the conventional system of art group exhibitions by advocating the principle of its French predecessor, "No judgement, no award".[12] Although it ended in 1964, this "independent" exhibition succeeded in introducing a number of "independent" young talents who did not belong to any art groups – including Akasegawa Genpei (赤瀬川原平, 1937–), Shinohara Ushio (篠原有司男, 1933–), Arakawa Shusaku (荒川修作, 1936–), and Kudo Tetsumi (工藤哲巳, 1935–90).[13]

Curators, "*gekugei-in*", also started to organise trans-group exhibitions in post-war Japan. They were officially-recognised experts newly introduced into the museum space which had long been monopolised by the art groups. This professional group challenged the privilege of the art groups in the gallery space and the art world more explicitly than the other two above. The curators' concern was to re-evaluate all the art works – especially those of modern Japan – in their historical perspective. They attempted to relocate all the masters and masterpieces which had previously existed independently within the boundaries of

---

[12] This anti-Salon group, Sociétés des Artistes Indépendants, was founded by Odilon Redon (1840–1916), George Seurat (1859–91), Paul Signac (1863–1935), etc. in Paris in 1884. In principle, there was no selection before the exhibition and no prize was awarded; any artist could submit his/her works up to a certain number with a small fee.

[13] For details of the Yomiuri Indépendant, Akasewaga himself wrote books on this exhibition (Akasegawa 1985; 1994).

each art group and without any general art-historic significance. Three curator-based museums were built early in the 1950s; the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (1951), the National Museum of Modern Art (1952), and the Bridgestone Museum of Art (1952). As I discuss later in this chapter, these institutions not only organised their original exhibitions but also denied the art groups their use of the museum galleries.

In the next section, I examine how the post-war art groups, which thus resurrected the *iemoto* world of their pre-war counterparts, were related to the establishment of new "empty" institutions in the 1950s. In the last chapter, I discussed the correlation between these groups of artists and the characteristic emptiness of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum. However, the two empty institutions I discuss in this chapter represent two different kinds of "emptiness" developed in post-war Japan. These museums – the Aichi Prefectural Art Museum and the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art – associated themselves with the art groups in distinct fashions while both seemingly homogeneous in their absence of collections and permanent displays. Each of them developed its own characteristic form of emptiness in its relations to the art groups and other elements of the local art scene.

6.3. Regional Art Groups and the Establishment of New Prefectural Art Museums

The Aichi Prefectural Art Museum was established in the City of Nagoya (名古屋市) as a regional version of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum. It focused on the "rental gallery" business, accommodating a number of exhibitions organised by local and national art groups. In the first year (1955), 22 out of the annual total of

40 exhibitions were sponsored by the art groups (Aichiken Bunka Kaikan 1979, 32). This orientation of the Museum as a gallery-type institution was declared by Director Ota Saburo (太田三郎, 1884–1969) in the first issue of the Museum's monthly newsletter, *Madoguchi* (『窓口』), published on the inauguration of the Museum: "The Museum is characterised not as a *musée* which holds its original collections and exhibits them regularly but as a gallery which devotes its whole space to various temporary exhibitions" (Ota 1955, 1). At the informal discussion recorded in the same issue, Ota clearly stated that the Museum had no plan for purchasing art works nor organising special exhibitions of its own in comparison to the new institution to the Tokugawa Museum (Tokugawa Bijutsukan [徳川美術館])[14] – a collection-based, private museum in Nagoya (Kuwahara, et al. 1955, 3). This emptiness the Aichi Museum assumed on its opening was closely related to the "art groups" in the same way as the Metropolitan Museum had been in the 1920s.

The campaign for the establishment of the Aichi Museum was led by local artists belonging to the Society for Art of Central Japan (Chubu Nihon Bijutsu Kyokai [中部日本美術協会]), and the President of this organisation was Ota himself. The Society was established in 1946 by the artists in three prefectures in this "Central Japan" region – Aichi, Gifu (岐阜), and Mie (三重) – to organise an annual competitive exhibition. The first exhibition, co-sponsored by a local newspaper publishing company, was held in 1947 at the Matsuzakaya Department Store in Nagoya. This exhibition group initially consisted of four categories of art (Japanese-style painting, Western-style painting, sculpture, and arts and crafts), to

---

[14] This museum, founded in 1935, was based on the great collection belonging to one of the most influential families of the Tokugawa shogunate – Owari Tokugawa (尾張徳川) – which resided in the Nagoya Castle until the Meiji Restoration.

which calligraphy and design were added later. The Society was dominated by the eminent artists from the region who had made a name for themselves in the *iemoto* system of the Tokyo art groups. Ota – Director of the Museum and President of the Society – himself was a Western-style painter, born in Aichi, who was affiliated with the official exhibition (Bunten/Teiten) before the War (Kimoto 1993, 15). He studied painting at an institution ran by one of the earliest art groups, the Hakuba Kai (白馬会; see 5.3), at the turn of the century, and his works were accepted by the Bunten exhibitions in 1910 and 1913.[15]

Although the Society was a trans-group organisation consisting of most major local artists and their disciples, its establishment promoted the systematisation of the growing artist population in the Aichi region under Tokyo art groups (ibid., 13). By the opening of the Museum, most major art groups based in Tokyo had established their Central Japan branches in Nagoya – including the Niki Kai (1948), the Shin Seisaku Kyokai (1948),[16] the Shunyo Kai (1949), the Nika Kai (1950), and the Japanese Academy of Art (i.e. the Inten; 1950). According to a survey in 1955 (Aichi-ken Bunka Kaikan 1979, 31), in Aichi prefecture alone, there were 24 groups of Western-style painters, 5 of Japanese-style painters, and 12 of sculptors; and

---

[15] Other principal members belonged to major groups in Tokyo such as the Bunten/Nitten, the Nika Kai, the Kofu Kai (光風会), the Niki Kai, the Shunyo Kai, the Kokuga Kai, the Inten, and the Seiryu Sha (青龍社) (Kimoto 1993, 12–13). They included Azuma Hekiu (我妻碧宇, 1905–70; Bunten/Nitten; Japanese-style painter), Kitagawa Tamiji (北川民次, 1894–1989; Nika; Western-style painter), Kito Nabesaburo (鬼頭鍋三郎, 1899–1982; Kofu; Western-style painter), and Nonomura Kazuo (野々村一男, 1906– ; Bunten/Nitten; sculptor).

[16] The Shin Seisaku Kyokai (新制作協会; Shin Seisaku-ha Kyokai [新制作派協会] when it was established) was launched by young Western-style painters of the Teiten in 1936. It now consists of a wide range of art – including sculpture, Japanese-style painting, and architecture. As far as the post-war period is concerned, the architecture division included the most spirited of the contemporary artists such as Tange Kenzo (丹下健三, 1913–)and Maekawa Kunio (前川国男, 1905–1986).

those who were officially registered with these groups numbered 2,085. Moreover, this development of the world of art groups in the region evolved into the conflict between the Nitten and the "*zaiya*" artists, which had long been a commonplace of the Tokyo art world (Funato 1955). Factional disputes in the Society for Art of Central Japan had always been present; and they exploded when a scandal over the choice of the members of the preparation committee for the establishment of the prefectural art museum was disclosed. More than 380 artists from 10 *zaiya* groups were separated from the Society to form the League for Zaiya Art of Central Japan (Chubu Zaiya Bijutsu Renmei [中部在野美術連盟]) in 1955. As a consequence of this split, the Society was dissolved soon after its tenth exhibition in the same year.

The circumstance of post-war Aichi was similar to that of Tokyo before the opening of the Metropolitan Museum. There were growing numbers of art groups in the region holding their regular exhibitions whereas no exhibition space had not yet been built. As in the case of pre-Metropolitan-Museum Tokyo, these groups depended mainly on department stores in Nagoya and other cities. There were two Nagoya-based department stores, the Matsuzakaya (松坂屋) and the Maruei (丸栄), which routinely accommodated these art exhibitions before the mid-1950s.[17] The campaigners for the Museum led by the artists belonging to the Society and other art groups accordingly expected this new institution, in the first place, to secure a permanent base for their group exhibitions. Kimoto Bunpei (1993, 15) argues: "Considering that there were only a few places to exhibit works of art such as chambers of commerce and the Matsuzakaya, Ota, as a representative of artists,

---

[17] As the Mitsukoshi in Tokyo and other Japanese department stores, the Matsuzakaya and the Maruei both originated in draper's shops established in the Edo period and developed into Western-style department stores in the Meiji/Taisho periods.

regarded it as more urgent business to secure the exhibition spaces for artists".

In contrast, the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art, built in Kamakura City (鎌倉市), 45 kilometres south from Tokyo, in 1951, did not function as a rental space for art group exhibitions. As a principle, the Museum progressively excluded these exhibitions of national and regional groups of artists and focused on temporary exhibitions organised by its own curatorial staff. The involvement of the art groups in the process of museum building was minimal in comparison to its counterparts in Tokyo and in Aichi. The campaign for establishing the Museum was led by the Roundtable Meeting of the Art Experts in Kanagawa (Kanagawa-ken Bijutsuka Konwakai [神奈川県美術家懇話会], 1949) consisting of artists, art historians, and art critics. The 33 members of the Roundtable Meeting contained a high proportion of the eminent artists who rose to fame in the major art group exhibitions in Tokyo – including Kaburagi Kiyokata (鏑木清方, 1878–1972),[18] Yasuda Yukihiko (安田靫彦, 1884–1978),[19] Arima Ikuma (有馬生馬, 1882–1974)[20], and Sato Takashi (佐藤敬, 1906–78)[21] (Seiichi Sasaki 1982).[22] However, these artists in Kanagawa Prefecture did not succeed in establishing an institution for their group exhibitions; on the contrary, they found themselves

---

[18] Kaburagi was a Japanese-style painter who was a member of the Japan Academy of Art (Nihon Geijutsu In, 日本芸術院), affiliated to the official exhibition (Bunten/Teiten/Nitten).

[19] Yasuda was a Japanese-style painter who was a member of the Japan Academy and the Japanese Academy (Inten).

[20] Arima was a Western-style painter who was a member of the Japan Academy and the Issui Kai (一水会), which was separated from the Nika Kai in 1936; he was also a founding member of the Nika Kai.

[21] Sato was a Western-style painter who was a founding member of the Shin Seisaku Kyokai which was separated from the Teiten in 1936.

[22] At least, 20 of the 33 members of the committee were the artists associated with art groups. They included: Ogura Yuki (小倉遊亀, 1895– ; Inten), Maeda Seison (前田青邨, 1885–1977; Inten), Yasui Sotaro (安井曾太郎, 1888–1955; Nika and Issui Kai), and Katori Hotsuma (香取秀真, 1874–1954; metalwork artist; Japan Academy).

expelled from the galleries of the new museum. Unlike the precedents in Tokyo and Aichi, it was not by the artists associated with art groups but the art critics and historians who took up the campaign initiative. Among the 33 members of the Roundtable Meeting, at least 6 were engaged in professions of art commentary and judgement; they included Murata Ryosaku (村田良策, 1895–1970), Hijikata Teiichi (土方定一, 1906–81), Uemura Takachiyo (植村鷹千代, 1911–98), Yashiro Yukio (矢代幸雄, 1890–1975), Yoshikawa Itsuji (吉川逸治, 1908–), and Yoshizawa Tadashi (吉沢忠). Moreover, the management of the Museum after its opening was entrusted to these art specialists. Murata became the founding Director of the Museum, holding the full-time post of the headmaster of the Tokyo Art College (1949–52); and Hijikata, an eminent art critic at the time, was appointed Assistant Director. The Advisors (*komon* [顧問]) and the Steering Committee (*unei-iinkai* [運営委員会]) consisted of 7 art critics/historians including Murata, Hijikata, Yashiro, and Yoshikawa.[23] Upon the opening of the museum in 1951, there were three full-time curators including Hijikata among five white-collar employees.[24] One was Yagyu Fujio (柳生不二雄)[25] who worked for one of the largest publishers in Japan as an editor of *The Complete Series of World Art*[26] when he was scouted by Hijikata and the other was Sasaki Seiichi (佐々木静一, 1923–), an art historian.

---

[23] According to Kanagawa-ken 1953 (228), there were 16 members in the Steering Committee; 3 Japanese-style painters, 3 Western-style painters, 1 architect, 1 researcher from the Tokyo National Museum, 1 from the Prefectural Assembly, and 2 officials of the Prefectural Office of Education (Kyoiku Iinkai [教育委員会]).

[24] The office organisation of local government in those days did not have a system to employ curatorial staff as a professional, and the curators were regarded as clerks in the existing hierarchy of civil servants.

[25] I interviewed him in May 2000. In 1975, he was appointed the Head of the gallery division of the newly-established Kanagawa Prefectural Hall (Kanagawa Kenmin Horu [神奈川県民ホール]).

[26] The publisher was Heibonsha (平凡社), which published the 29-volume series of *Sekai Bijutsu Zenshu* between 1950 and 1955.

The curatorial policy of the Kanagawa Museum was accordingly determined and developed by these specialists. This profession, "curator" ("*gakugei-in*" 「学芸員」), literally meaning "a person in charge of arts and sciences", was defined by the Museum Law in 1951 for the first time. Like the profession of school teaching, it required a national license normally obtained by taking a course of both theoretical and practical classes at the university. Of course, the curators of the Kanagawa Museum, only established in the year after the Law was enacted, could not have been properly licensed. Nevertheless, the birth of *gakugei-in* and its introduction into the museum space indicate the fact that for the first time in the history of the public art museum in Japan a form of curatorial authority was introduced to the institution which had been monopolised for decades by artists and their groups. The Kanagawa Museum was the first institution founded by and for the *gakugei-in*. In relation to this curatorial authority, the Museum developed unprecedented characteristics; it was "empty" in the sense that it did not hold any art collections and had no permanent space ("permanent galleries") in which to display them, but at the same time it refused to accommodate art group exhibitions. The Museum was different from the two types of museums which had been developed in Japan by the end of the War. One was represented by the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, which was as empty as the Kanagawa Museum but focused on the rental gallery business for art group exhibitions. The other type was the collection-based museum which did not accommodate art group exhibitions but had permanent galleries for their collections. These museums included the Imperial Museums (which were "nationalised" after the war) specialising in pre-modern artefacts and the privately-run art museums such as the Ohara Museum of Art (Ohara

Bijutsukan [大原美術館], 1930)[27] and the Nezu Institute of Fine Arts (Nezu Bijutsukan [根津美術館], 1941).[28] This distinction from the existing institutions was associated with a general curatorial policy of the Kanagawa Museum; the Museum aimed at finding its own way quite different from either those heavily relying on their own substantial collections and their permanent exhibitions or the ones functioning as rental galleries (Kanagawa-ken 1952, 144; 1953, 228). This orientation of the Museum was associated with an unprecedented mode of curatorial practices developed by the museum-based curators, which will be discussed in the next section (6.4).

Instead of art group exhibitions and permanent displays, the Kanagawa Museum held various "*kikakuten*" (「企画展」) exhibitions – temporary exhibitions organised with loan objects according to certain themes or artists. After the opening exhibition of works by Cézanne and Renoir that were owned by Japanese collectors, the Museum held a dozen of such *kikakuten* on various subjects every year. This policy to focus on *kikakuten* exhibitions was unique to the Kanagawa Museum; therefore, it was generally called, the "Hijikata Method" ("*Hijikata hoshiki*" 「土方方式」) after the Assistant Director Hijikata or the "Kamakin Method" ("*Kamakin hoshiki*" 「鎌近方式」) after the Museum's nickname.[29] This form of

---

[27] The Ohara Museum of Art was established in Kurashiki City, Okayama Prefecture (岡山県倉敷市) by Ohara Magosaburo (大原孫三郎, 1880–1943), a local entrepreneur and an enthusiastic art collector. On the basis of this private museum was Ohara's private collections of a wide range of art, especially of Western art.

[28] The Nezu Institute of Fine Arts was established in the Aoyama District of Tokyo in 1940 and opened to public in the next year. Its original collection was based on the oriental antiques owned by Nezu Kaichiro (根津嘉一郎, 1860–1940), a politician and the founder of the Tobu Railways (東武鉄道) which developed into the Tobu Group (東武グループ). He was also known as an enthusiastic practitioner of tea ceremony.

[29] "Kamakin" is an abbreviation of "Kamakura Kindai Bijutsukan" (「鎌倉近代美術

exhibition had always been an essential component of the empty museums as well as the art group exhibition, but the *kikakuten* developed by the Kanagawa Museum was distinguished from its pre-war and wartime predecessors. Before the establishment of the Kanagawa Museum, it meant an exhibition which was normally planned and sponsored by various organisations outside the museums – most typically by local authorities and newspaper publishers (see 6.2). Without any funding available for such events and any curatorial authority on the museum staff to plan them, the empty museums had to rely on these outside financial and human resources when organising special events other than art group exhibitions. For instance, these exhibitions held at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum included: "Masterpieces of Meiji and Taisho" (「明治大正名作展」, 1927; sponsored by the Asahi Newspaper), "Western Art Exhibition" (「泰西美術展」, 1928; sponsored by Tokyo Metropolitan Government), "National Treasures of Japan" (「日本名宝展」, 1929; sponsored by the Yomiuri Newspaper), and "Children's Art Exhibition for the Celebration of the Friendly Relations between Japan, Germany, and Italy" (「日独伊親善全国子供美術展」, 1938; sponsored by Morinaga Confectionery Company).[30] However, the *kikakuten* exhibitions of the Kanagawa Museum were distinguished from these predecessors because, unlike the pre-war empty institutions, the Museum, directed and staffed by curators, insisted on its own planning and sponsoring of all the exhibitions it accommodated. Newspaper publishing

---

館」). This full name itself is not the formal name containing the name of the prefecture (Kanagawa), but the Museum was commonly called by the name of the city, "Kamakura", instead.

[30] See Tokyo-to Kyoiku Iinkai c. 1965, 10–17. The "Children's Art Exhibition", held just after an anticommunist treaty was concluded among Japan, Germany, and Italy (日独伊防共協定), set a record in the number of visitors, 768,000, which outnumbered the annual visitors of most years by far. See Figure 6.1.

companies and other public and private organisations could support the exhibitions, and their support – especially in finance – was essential for the ill-funded Museum to pursue their projects. Nevertheless, these external sponsors were not allowed to take over the projects from the curatorial staff of the Museum. It was also on this basis that the exhibitions organised by art groups were rejected. This persistent adherence to the Museum's own policy was the most significant principle of this unprecedented institution.[31]

This curatorial policy of the Kanagawa Museum was adopted by many other institutions, most typically by a new kind of public museum called "the museum of modern art" ("*kindai bijutsukan*" 「近代美術館」). I have already pointed out that there had been a series of campaigns for the establishment of a collection-based "museum of modern art" since the Meiji period; but such an institution did not develop in the first half of the twentieth century except for one isolated and uncompleted case of the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art (see 6.1). Now, an institution called "museum of modern art" was established in Kanagawa; and this museum was immediately followed by a national institution in Tokyo – the National Museum of Modern Art (1952). However, neither was based on collections and permanent displays of modern art. The Kanagawa Museum invented the so-called "Hijikata/Kamakin Method", focusing on various *kikakuten* exhibitions; and the National Museum also took up this method. The opening exhibition of the National Museum entitled "Modern Japanese Art – Retrospective and Perspective of Modern Painting" (「日本近代美術展：近代絵画の回顧と展望」) contained no exhibits owned by

---

[31] The importance of this principle was frequently emphasised by those who were curators of the Museum in the 1950s in their personal interviews, including Asahi 2000 and Yagyu 2000.

the Museum among the 184 works on display (Funato 1958, 101), and priority was given to the *kikakuten* exhibitions despite the fact that the Museum acquired more than 240 works of Japanese modern art from the Ministry of Education in 1954.[32] Like the Kanagawa Museum, this policy of the National Museum was developed by the curatorial staff under the leadership of Assistant Director Imaizumi Atsuo (今泉篤男, 1902–). He was an eminent art critic, equal to Hijikata of the Kanagawa Museum. Moreover, the members of the Advisory and Steering Committees of the two museums often overlapped each other – including Hijikata, Imaizumi, Murata (Director of the Kanagawa Museum), Yashiro Yukio, Yoshikawa Itsuji, and Tominaga Soichi (富永惣一, 1902–).

When the "Hijikata/Kamakin Method" is criticised, its transience and its total reliance on external material resources tend to be emphasised. The Museum is considered as yet another example of "empty museums" that did not develop its own collections and permanent displays. However, the "emptiness" of this post-war institution was distinguished from that of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum. The Kanagawa Museum did *not* hold the "art group exhibitions" which were predominant in the Metropolitan Museum. The Kanagawa Museum consistently refused such exhibitions though there were some demands from local artists for the use of the Museum (Murata 1953, 166–67). The Museum instead held a series of "*kikakuten* exhibitions", which were curated not by outside organisations but the Museum itself. Thus the "emptiness" of the Kanagawa Museum was by no means associated with the art groups; it was uniquely and positively developed by the museum-based curators under the leadership of Hijikata and was closely related to

---

32 See 6.4 for the implication of this specific curatorial attitude of curators.

the curators' expectation for their vacant museum galleries and their use of the *kikakuten* exhibitions.

6.4. Curators and the Empty Museums

My aim in this section is to account for the relations between the characteristic emptiness of the "museums of modern art" and the museum-based curatorial staff. How were the two characteristics of these post-war institutions – exclusion of art groups and adoption of Hijikata/Kamakin Method (i.e. the curatorial policy focusing on the *kikakuten* exhibitions) – developed in relation to the newly-invented curatorial experts of the museums? I now examine how the curators developed the particular emptiness of their museums through their choices and decisions.

The Kanagawa's drastic policy to exclude the art group exhibitions from the museum galleries does not mean that there was no art group that expected to use the new museum for its exhibitions. According to the survey in 1952, there were 18 art groups including 6 groups of calligraphers and 3 of photographers out of the 161 groups for cultural activities in the prefecture.[33] Many local artists were closely and directly related to the Tokyo art groups, because Kanagawa Prefecture adjoins Tokyo Metropolis; and these artists were actually involved in the establishment of the Museum (see 6.3). The art groups in Kanagawa had no purpose-built space for their exhibitions; they resorted to the department stores in Yokohama and other major cities. After the opening, the Museum received a number of complaints from the local artists about its decision; but it still refused their claims for access on the

---

[33] The figures are take from *The Outline of Education in Kanagawa Prefecture* edited by the Kanagawa Prefecture Education Committee (Kanagawa-ken 1952, 145). The 161 cultural groups included 48 "general" groups, 38 *haiku* (Japanese short poems) groups, and 7 music groups.

basis of the Museum's curatorial policy (Murata 1953, 166). The curators' institutions refused not only the art group exhibitions but also the *iemoto* masters and their reputed works associated with these exhibitions. As I showed in the last two chapters, each art group was considerably independent and insular; it gathered its members, organised its own exhibition, and produced its own masterpieces and hierarchy of artists. These masters and masterpieces were valid only within the boundary of each individual group with little chance of the works from different groups being displayed at the same exhibition either for competition or for comparison. The official exhibition (Bunten/Teiten/Nitten) had its canon spanning half a century; but the official canon was not recognised by any "unofficial" exhibition groups – such as the Nika and the Inten (Academy) – which had their own genealogy of masters and masterpieces. On the contrary, the *iemoto* authorities of other groups were severely criticised. The curators refused to conform to these sectionalised canons of modern Japanese art as they were – no matter whether they represented official or unofficial tastes. They insisted on making their own judgements on the *iemoto* masterpieces before these works were displayed in their museums. Hijikata described one purpose of the Kanagawa Museum as follows: "to revise the art history which had been deformed by the pre-war art policy associated with the bureaucratic control which protected only the official exhibitions, to highlight obscure artists, and to produce lists of their works and investigate their research materials" (Hijikata 1976, 435). The Museum took up a number of artists who did not establish their status and reputation in the pre-war art group system, including Saeki Yuzo (佐伯祐三, 1898–1928), Koide Narashige (小出楢重, 1887–1931), Koga Harue (古賀春江, 1895–1933), and

Matsumoto Shunsuke (松本竣介, 1912–48).[34]

The curators reorganised the *iemoto* masterpieces by means of the specialised knowledge in "art history" which had long been a standard system for the curatorial practices of art museums in the West. It was a project committed to re-examining the works, styles, and movements which had long been regarded merely as "*ryuha*" ("schools") by relocating them into the historical dimension. The *kikakuten* exhibitions represented this historical perspective on the works of art which remained undeveloped in the art world of the *iemoto* masters and their disciples. This historicisation programme of the curators forms a part of their larger-scale project to designate "new classics" from the contemporary works of Japanese art. As I indicated in Chapter 4, the production of the "new classics" would involve two stages; firstly, the "old" classics had to be formed, and then the new works were to be evaluated on the basis of those canonical objects of art. The first attempt to establish an institution to produce the contemporary classics systematically was made by the Bunten officials at the very beginning of the twentieth century. Based on the progressively historicised pre-modern classics, the Bunten – the "Japanese Salon" – was expected to select contemporary masterpieces to continue the historical sequence of Japanese art. However, the expected links between the antiques and the modern classics were not established either by the generations of the official exhibition or by the public art museums including the Metropolitan Museum. While pre-modern art rapidly acquired historical meanings, the great masters and masterpieces of modern Japanese art were determined by "ahistorical" and "sectional" perspectives associated with the *iemoto* system of the art groups (see

---

[34] See Yagyu 1982 and Yagyu 2000.

Chapter 5).

The Kanagawa Museum resumed the abortive project of the early Bunten. The avant-gardist, art-historical perspectives associated with modern European and American institutions were applied to the development of the canon of Japanese art and the designation of new classics from contemporary works. However, unlike the pre-war situation where the old and new classics were separated into different institutions (the Imperial Museums for the former and the Metropolitan Museum for the latter), the post-war institutions conducted those two stages by themselves. The Kanagawa Museum organised their *kikakuten* exhibitions so that "the history of art of Japan and the rest of the world would be understood if one continues to visit this museum for several years".[35] These exhibitions consisted of a wide range of pre-modern/modern, Japanese/non-Japanese art although their focus was on modern Japan. A number of modern Japanese artists were introduced through those exhibitions, including Fujikawa Yuzo (藤川勇造, 1883–1935), Saeki Yuzo, and Kobayashi Kiyochika (小林清親, 1847–1915). However, the opening exhibition was "Cézanne and Renoir" (1951). Western art exhibitions included "Rouault's Etchings" (1951–52), "Modern French Paintings" (1952), and "Expressionism" (1952). Eastern exhibitions showed Japanese antiques ("Ukiyo-e of Sharaku and Utamaro" [1951]) and Chinese antiques ("Black and Coloured Earthenware" [1951], "Antique Chinese Ceramics" [1952]).[36] This seemingly haphazard choice of subjects was justified partly in terms of the "internationalism" of art history and partly in relation to their contribution to the development of modern art. These

---

[35] This statement is quoted by Yagyu 1982 as what Hijikata used to say.

[36] A comprehensive and detailed list of *kikakuten* exhibitions of the Kanagawa Museum in the first 30 years is included in Kanagawa-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan 1982.

art-historical perspectives had to transcend not only the boundaries of "art groups" but also the borders between different countries. The history of modern Japanese art did not only mean to continue the history of Japanese antiques but also meant to form a part of the whole history of European, American, and Asian art. It was according to this principle, for example, that the sculptures of Fujikawa were displayed as "a Japanese Rodin", and Saeki was introduced as an overseas Japanese painter who developed his career in the artistic circles in pre-World-War-I Paris. As regards the seemingly contradictory displays of pre-modern art in the "modern-art" museum, the first issue of the Museum's *Annual* (1957) explained in "Postscript":

> The reason why we exhibited Oriental and Japanese antiques is that we intended to fertilise our contemporary art by introducing fresh and unknown creations in those pre-modern traditions. [*Kanagawa-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan Nenpo* 1, 101]

The "classics" of the art groups were restructured according to these principles of the curators'. The *iemoto* masters who retained their absolute positions in the particular system of art groups were re-evaluated by the trans-group and international perspectives of art history.

According to these "historicised" classics of the past, the new classics were produced. This was what Fisher calls in the context of American museum purchases a "speculative" and "prophetic" act to designate "the future's past" (Fisher 1991, 23). Among a great number of contemporary works, the curators foretell which would occupy significant positions in the historical sequence where those works would represent a part of the past in the future. This act was apparently recognised as essential for a "museum of modern art" in general by Hijikata. He defined this kind of museum as "an institution which exhibits and purchases not

only the reputed works of contemporary masters but also the experimental works of new talents".[37] This eagerness to launch the "speculative" and "prophetic" task was related to the practices of the Western precedents – especially the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA). This was respected and adored by many art and museum experts of Japan in the 1950s (Seiichi Sasaki 1982), including two leading figures of Japanese museums of modern art – Hijikata of the Kanagawa Museum and Imaizumi of the National Museum. In their discussion in an art journal, they both praised the speculative spirit of the American institution, and Imaizumi commented on its exhibitions and collections:

> In my opinion, it is still acceptable even if two thirds of the artists whose works were taken up for the Museum's exhibitions and collections would fall into oblivion in the future. Only if they would stimulate and make conspicuous the one third. The Museum shows a certain kind of determination or attitude to lead art criticism instead of conforming to the usual "standards" established by public opinion and art journalism. [Imaizumi and Hijikata 1955, 116–17]

However, the significance of this task was not commonly recognised in Japan. As Yagyu (1982) points out, it was completely unheard-of that a museum would evaluate contemporary works and show artists certain prospects for artistic trends of the future, and there was no museum that had done it. The pre-war institutions did not aim to organise any temporary exhibitions by themselves, devoting themselves to renting their galleries to the exhibitions organised by outside sponsors such as art groups, newspaper publishing companies, and government. The selection and arrangement of exhibits in these exhibitions were left to the hanging committees consisting of the members of art groups or to the experts appointed by the sponsors. The Kanagawa Museum, staffed by curatorial authority,

---

[37] Teiichi Hijikata, "Gendai-bijutsukan e-no chumon", *Mainichi Shinbun* 17 January 1951, quoted by Seiichi Sasaki 1982.

was an unprecedented institution in Japan, which ventured into a field virtually untouched by any pre-war museums.

The Kanagawa Museum was thus distinguished from the empty museums that functioned as rental spaces for art group exhibitions. The emptiness characteristic of this post-war institution was developed by the curators who progressively eliminated two principal factors which had formed the emptiness of its predecessors – the prosperity of the art groups and the lack of historical perspectives. This may seem at first to contradict my earlier argument about the necessary relationship between art-historical perspectives and a collections policy in Western museums (3.5). For it was by this specific knowledge that the currently predominant mode of curatorial practices involving collecting and displaying art objects were made possible in Europe and the United States. Progressively, since the eighteenth century, the discipline of art-history had progressively ranked the works from the past – determining their value in museum collections and their positions in permanent displays. "The ideal museum", Fisher (1991) writes, "would be at last the complete history in which the path would go from horizon to horizon, each picture answering the questions asked by its neighbors, each intelligible in the visible society of styles and periods" (23). In practice, all museums inevitably have gaps in their historical collections and displays; and they would try to fill the gaps so as to approach the ideal when they make a decision about their new purchases. Contemporary works are evaluated in their potential to update this historical sequence in the future. These selected works would be acquired by art museums as part of their collections and exhibited in the museums' permanent galleries to complete their art-historical displays. The curatorial staff of the Kanagawa

Museum were by no means ignorant of this correlation between the historicisation of art objects and the development of collection-based museums in the modern West. On the contrary, they were fully aware of the importance of substantial collections and permanent exhibitions in their institution. For example, Hijikata clearly stated in his newspaper article published just before the opening of the Museum: "In my opinion, . . . [the Museum] essentially has to be equipped with permanent galleries for the historical displays of modern Japanese art".[38] The Museum made two purchases of art works in the year it opened; one was a set of elaborate reproductions of Western paintings,[39] and the other was *Composition* (1949) by Andre Minaux (1923–) which was exhibited at the "Salon de Mai Japon" exhibition.[40] However, it was apparent that the Museum's focus was not so much on the development of collections and permanent displays as on the *kikakuten* exhibitions with rented objects.

This decision over the curatorial policy was positively made by the curatorial staff of the Museum, who *chose not to* imitate the Western institutions such as the MoMA by amassing collections and developing collection-based exhibitions. The curators by no means abandoned their art-historical project; but they attempted to find their way to further their own interests in the particular conditions of Japan in the 1950s. The Hijikata/Kamakin Method – characteristic in its focus on the *kikakuten* exhibitions rather than following collection-based models in the West –

---

[38] Teiichi Hijikata, "Gendai-bijutsukan e-no chumon", *Mainichi Shinbun* 17 January 1951, quoted by Seiichi Sasaki 1982. Also see Murata 1953, 167 for the Director's opinion.

[39] According to Yagyu 1982, they were 30 French reproductions of Cézanne, Renoir, van Gogh, etc.

[40] The exhibition, sponsored by the Mainichi Shinbun newspaper publishing company, was held at the Takashimaya department store in Nihonbashi, Tokyo, in 1951.

was adopted in response to the fact that the historical perspectives had not developed in modern Japanese art. The lack of historical perspectives in modern Japanese art brought about the conditions which made it impossible for the Museum to form a historical collection/display of post-Meiji art. Although antiques had already been historicised in various institutions – such as the Imperial Museums and the Tokyo Art College, the history of modern works which spanned more than half a century remained undeveloped when the Kanagawa Museum launched the programme. The short-term *kikakuten* exhibition was an ideal way to pursue this historicisation programme. A typical process of a *kikakuten* planning began with a curator's decision to focus on a certain artist whose name was proposed by somebody or whose works were seen in an exhibition.[41] The curator then looked into the artist's profile, made a list of his/her works, and investigated their whereabouts. Most artists were unknown; most works either remained hidden after their first exhibition (usually art group exhibitions) or had never seen the light of day. Under these circumstances, it was natural that the construction of a modern-art history should have priority over the evaluation of contemporary art. There were sharp criticisms of the National Museum of Modern Art in the 1950s that the Museum put too much emphasis on the historicisation of the past and neglected the ongoing artistic currents of the present. The majority of its *kikakuten* exhibitions were named either "reminiscence", "genealogy", "Meiji", or "Taisho" (*Geijutsu Shincho* 8.5, 181), and the Museum's purchases concentrated on the early works of modern art at the turn of the nineteenth/twentieth centuries while the modern-art museums in Paris and New York positively acquired the works of contemporary young artists

---

[41] This process of the making of a kikakuten exhibition in the early years of the Kanagawa Museum is mentioned by Asahi 2000; Yagyu 1982; 2000.

(Mashimo 1955, 270). A contemporary journal article sarcastically described the National Museum of Modern Art as nothing but "the Modern Section of the National Museum" (*Geijutsu Shincho* 8.5, 181). However, without establishing the historical current of Japanese modern art, the contemporary works could not have been evaluated. The critical article cited above ironically gave a good account of the policy of the National Museum:

> Although Japan is called "a land of art [*bijutsu*]", general interest in art – especially in the history of modern art – seems considerably low. Therefore, first of all, we [the National Museum] need to clarify the development of Japanese art in modern times – the process in which the art evolved into the chaos of the present – rather than the present situation of Japanese art itself. [*Geijutsu Shincho* 8.5, 181]

In Meiji, the antiques which had long been evaluated by the particular perspectives – such as those associated with tea ceremony – were re-classified as the "classics of Japanese art" according to the "modern" historical perspectives. These newly-recognised classics were to constitute the basis of the contemporary classics produced by the Bunten exhibition. Now the post-Meiji works of art which had been evaluated in the art group system for half a century needed to be historicised for the evaluation of contemporary art.

Thus the Japanese "museums of modern art" in the 1950s developed characteristics which distinguished them from their Western counterparts and other existing Japanese institutions. Their characteristic "emptiness" was developed in relation to the museum-based curators who distanced themselves from the value system and the interests of the art groups, associated themselves with the Western curatorial practices based on art-historical perspectives, and negotiated with the socio-cultural circumstances of contemporary Japan. The curatorial policies of these institutions to organise a series of *kikakuten* exhibitions and to hold no

collection, no permanent display, no art group exhibition were pursued in this process of transculturation.

6.5. Curators in the Art Field

In the last section, I discussed how a new type of empty museum, embodied for the first time in the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art, was developed by the museum-based curators who negotiated between the Western curatorial practices related to particular art-historical perspectives and the distinct cultural conditions pertaining to modern Japanese art which were associated with the art group system. In this section, my concern is focused on the transcultural nature of the curators themselves. As the art groups were developed as a hybrid of the Western artistic practices and the Japanese cultural traditions in the first half of the twentieth century, the curator also evolved as a hybrid of different cultures thorough the transculturation process. In other words, despite its affinity to the Western museum profession, the Japanese curator – *gakugei-in* – cannot simply be regarded as an incarnation of its Western counterpart or a missionary from the Western museum culture. Instead it should be considered as a profession uniquely developed in relation to the socio-cultural context of post-war Japan and that, therefore, has its own unique attributes.

The best way to analyse the transcultural nature of the Japanese curator is to examine the position that the curator occupied in the art field. The Japanese art field in the 1950s had three principal agents associated with the development of the public art museums – i.e. art groups, curators, and intellectual/academic journalism. The journalism associated with art criticism had already developed by the

mid-1920s (see 5.4). Some of the critics were directly and specifically related to the world of art groups; and some, based at academic institutions (such as Waseda University), were engaged in professional and academic critiques. In the post-war journalism, a particular kind of criticism associated with academic publications and critics became increasingly vocal. In relation to this kind of journalism and the art groups in the same field, the curators occupied a unique position which was distinguished from its Western counterpart.

First, the academic critics and the curators shared the same intellectual concern – "art history". Earlier in this chapter (6.2), I have already argued that both the Kanagawa and the National Museums were established *by* and *for* art critics and historians. They led the planning of the new museums whose policy focused on the constitution of modern Japanese art history; and, after opening, they made important decisions about curatorial practices as "curators" or "members of the steering committees". As a consequence, both the critics and the curators distinguished themselves from the art groups. In the last section, I pointed out that the Kanagawa Museum refused to accept the *iemoto* masters and masterpieces as they were and insisted on constituting a distinct form of canon associated with the expertise of the curators/critics. I point to another case of the distinction made by these professionals; both the curators and the academic critics differentiated themselves from the "critics" associated with the art groups. The curators/critics associated with the modern art museums formed the Bijutsu Hyoronka *Renmei* (AICA Japan [美術評論家連盟]) in 1954. As a Japanese branch of the International Association of Art Critics (Association International des Critiques d'Art, i.e., AICA [国際美術評論家協会]), it was an organisation internationally recognised.

Symbolically, it was based in the National Museum of Modern Art and the first chairman was Hijikata, Assistant Director of the Kanagawa Museum. Most contributors to major critical and academic journals belonged to this group. The Renmei was formed to make a distinction from the Bijutsu Hyoronka *Kyokai* (Association of Art Critics [美術評論家協会]), which mainly consisted of critics and journalists who were deeply rooted in the art groups. The Kyokai was based in the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum – the centre of the art group exhibitions. The publications associated with the Kyokai members were typically small in scale and circulation. These journals were not widely available through commercial channels, usually posted directly for free to those who were recognised as "professional" in the art world – including artists, critics, and dealers. The articles often contained scandals and gossips in the trade as well as the criticisms of art group exhibitions. The members of the Renmei were critical about their colleagues in the Kyokai, calling them, "dopesters" and "vermin of the art world" (*Geijutsu Shincho* 9.10). According to their journal articles, those "dopesters" and "vermin" needed to keep themselves well-informed about the world of the art groups – their family troubles, the conflict between different groups, and their quarrel over their sphere of influence. Then, they had a field day once any trouble broke up; in some cases they saved the situation, and in others they kindled it. The same article also recognised a sign of their waning prosperity; it wrote that they were gradually being pushed into the corner by the raising power of mass media including national daily papers and periodicals.

However, the curators could not always be identified with the leftist critics of the academic journalism. The curators often undertook a difficult and important

role as "mediators" between the art groups which conflicted with the curators in many respects and the critics/historians who were sympathetic to the curators. According to the contemporary coverage in critical journals, it seems that the National Museum was engaged in this role more earnestly than the Kanagawa Museum. Imaizumi, Assistant Director of the National Museum and a leading figure in art criticism, was aware of the complaints the Museum received because of its noncommittal position.

> I am sure that the current management of the National Museum of Modern Art would satisfy neither leftists [left-wing critics and art historians] nor conservatives [those who support art groups and their value system]. Therefore, we find ourselves badly knocked about, but I guess it cannot be helped. I regard it as our duty; we should volunteer to be knocked about. [Imaizumi and Hijikata 1955, 124]

The tension between the Museum, the critics and the art groups was most evident in their controversies over the opening exhibition of this first national institution focused on modern art. The exhibition, "Modern Japanese Art: Retrospective and Perspective of Modern Painting" (「日本近代美術展：近代絵画の回顧と展望」), gathered 184 works of Japanese-style and European-style paintings by post-Meiji Japanese artists from various major and minor art groups.

The critics expected the exhibition to show a form of genealogy of modern Japanese art of the kind available to the visitors of Western art museums – i.e. an evolutionary progress of artistic styles and movements in modern Japanese painting. To them, the exhibition seemed to have made selections to cover and please everybody and was therefore disorderly.[42] As I demonstrated in the previous chapters, the art groups had no sympathy with this particular sense of history associated with Western art. Their world was characterised by the synchronism of

---

[42] For example, see a statement of Yoshizawa Chu (吉沢忠, 1909–88) in Uemura, et

the various styles and movements symbolising certain times of historical progress and constituting a part of diachronic flow in the West. The critics felt that the exhibition simply and unjustly acknowledged this "anachronistic" and "*un*modernistic" synchronism of art groups which equated "modern art" with every form of art in the twentieth century.[43] Uemura, a leading figure of the contemporary critics involved in the establishment/management of the two modern art museums in the 1950s, stated:

> The exhibits [of the opening exhibition of the National Museum] evenly cover all principal art groups in Japan including the Nitten. This principle accompanies a great risk; when the authoritarianism of the Nitten was regarded as something to be urgently eliminated in terms of anachronism, all the paintings – from those of the Nitten artists to those of the members of the modern-art groups may be wrongly perceived as nothing more than variations on the plane of modern painting. [Uemura and Imaizumi 1953, 11]

For him, the conventional perspective associated with the art groups where "Impressionistic realism and cubism, or abstract are located on the same plane and considered merely as different [*iemoto*] schools (*ryuha* [流派]) of painting" was completely unacceptable (Uemura, et al. 1953, 31). In his opinion, representational paintings evolved into abstract paintings in the West; and it was essential that the overview of modern Japanese art should adopt this historical sequence. This is the very reason why he protested particularly against an arrangement where a work representing what he calls "the Nitten-style realism" was juxtaposed with an avant-gardist, "abstract" painting. For the critic, the former should belong to the past from which the modern style developed; therefore, it should not have been displayed as contemporary with the modern abstract. He further suggested that the exhibition instead should have included a painting which would show the

---

al. 1953, 36.

evolutionary mutation from the representational style to the abstract (Uemura, et al. 1953, 31; Uemura and Imaizumi 1953, 14–15).

The art groups would have liked to see the works of their *iemoto* masters in the past and the present at the opening exhibition of the National Museum, and the established groups expected more works to be exhibited than the newcomers. However, the artists realised that the selection criteria of the Museum did not necessarily conform to the hierarchies of artists and institutions produced in the art group system. Tajika Kenzo (田近憲三),[44] an art critic closely associated with an art group, the Dokuritsu Bijutsu Kyokai, cautiously implied his dissatisfaction:

> [The selection of the exhibits] does not seem to reflect either the dignity of painting, the skills, or the substantial value. It is a great mistake if those who were not selected here are regarded as inferior to those who were selected. As a whole, the selection was made equally from the aged, the middle-aged, and the adolescent groups in terms of the age of the institution; and also the selected artists moderately consisted of the great masters, the middle masters, and the new talents. Though it is of course a question of my personal opinion, it seemed to me that the artists not only of the top grades (Classes A and B) but also of the lowest grade (Class C) were generously included. [Uemura, et al. 1953, 38]

As Imaizumi, who was responsible for the selection of works at the exhibition, was aware, the Museum was severely criticised by the art groups as "biased" and "outrageous" because it did not chose some obvious masterpieces (Uemura and Imaizumi 1953, 16–17).

The seemingly egalitarian selection of works for the opening exhibition failed to satisfy both the critics and the art groups. However, the Museum strongly denied any accusation of giving a ration to each group and any prejudice against the "official" Nitten artists (Uemura and Imaizumi 1953, 13). Its ultimate purpose was

---

[43] See comments made by various art experts in Uemura, et al. 1953.

[44] Tajika's close link to the Dokuritsu Bijutsu Kyokai may be proved by the fact that a special prize named after him (Tajika Kenzo sho [田近憲三賞]) was founded for the

to construct an historical survey of modern Japanese art, unrestricted by the value system of the art groups. As I discussed in the previous sections of this chapter, the curators were closely related to the critics and the historians; therefore their expertise was based on the specialised knowledge of art history. Imaizumi stated in response to the criticism of Uemura: "We made every effort to choose the works for that exhibition not because they were produced by 'great masters' but because they orientated modern paintings even in a little degree" (Uemura and Imaizumi 1953, 16). Nevertheless, the Museum was also aware of the large number of existing "masters" and "masterpieces" which had long been produced and evaluated in the peculiar world of art groups. These renowned artists and their works were associated with the particular power structure of Japanese artistic tradition, virtually independent of the artistic styles and movements of the West; but the curators knew this well-established canon of modern Japanese art could not be simply ignored and restructured according to the historical narrative of Western art.

> The existing history of modern Japanese art seems to be too poor to establish a museum – though not perfectly – which shows a genealogy of modern painting. However, we can do nothing but present it no matter how poor it is. We knew it absolutely impossible to realise our ideals abroad – such as the museum of modern art in Paris, and so we deliberated on things we should do now. To be honest, it cannot be denied that the current exhibits at the Museum contain quite a few paintings which are not worth hanging on the Museum's walls. The reason why those paintings remain exhibited there is that we believe that they would eventually be excluded in the severe and inevitable process of historical selections. In order to form a true genealogy of modern painting step by step, we thought, our initial selection should cover a wide-range of artistic products and then gradually it should be narrowed down. [Uemura and Imaizumi 1953, 19–20]

This ambivalent attitude taken by the curatorial staff of the National Museum would become more significant during the museum boom which began at the end of

---

Kyokai's annual exhibition in 1991 to commemorate his contribution to the group.

the 1960s. Both the National Museum and the Kanagawa Museum in the 1950s were exceptions of the post-war institutions in the sense that they successfully refused to accommodate any art group exhibition and thus distinguished themselves from the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum. In many cases, a public art museum was a hybrid of these two distinct types of "empty museum", involving both the art group exhibitions and the *kikakuten* exhibitions. These two interest groups encountered in one institution, and consequently their interactions were intensified.

6.6. Conclusion

A kind of curatorial authority, associated with Western curatorial practices based on art history and occupying a peculiar position in the art field in relation to the art groups and the academic journalism, was thus formed in post-war public art museums for the first time in Japanese history. This new agent of the field developed a new type of "empty museum", distinguished from the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum and its followers, which progressively excluded art groups and their exhibitions. The first institution of this type was the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (1951), and it became a model of many other institutions whose early examples included the Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art (1952), the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (Hyogo-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan [兵庫県立近代美術館], 1970), the Wakayama Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (Wakayama-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan [和歌山県立近代美術館], 1970), the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts (Tochigi-kenritsu Bijutsukan [栃木県立美術館], 1972), the Gunma Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (Gunma-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan [群馬県立近代美術館], 1974), and the Hokkaido Museum of

Modern Art (Hokkai-doritsu Kindai Bijutsukan [北海道立近代美術館], 1977). These museums of "modern art" focused on historicising Japanese modern art, which had not been pursued comprehensively in the Metropolitan-Museum-type institutions that were occupied by art group exhibitions associated with the *iemoto* system.

However, two interest groups in the post-war empty museums – art groups and curators – did not simply establish their sanctuaries in their separate institutions. They were not completely segregated from each other and so did not develop their own spheres without any interference from the other. What actually occurred in the post-war institutions throughout the latter half of the twentieth century were incessant "contacts" between these groups. These two leaders in the public art museums in post-war Japan constantly interacted, conflicted, and negotiated over the use of galleries and the right to evaluate works of art. This issue will lead us to the next chapter concerning the development of the institutions during the museum boom – the period between the late 1960s and the early 1990s. The two types of empty museums I have examined in this chapter were still valid as two extreme models of those institutions characterised by their emptiness; but both old and new institutions were more unlikely to fit precisely into either of these distinct types in the following decades. The newly-established "museums of modern art" which followed the style of the Kanagawa Museum actually acquired diverse characteristics depending on their regional contexts. Most notably, the Hyogo Museum and the Wakayama Museum consisted of two different sets of galleries – one for the kikakuten exhibitions by their own curatorial staff and the other for the art group exhibitions. Moreover, the extreme cases themselves – the Tokyo Metropolitan/Aichi and the Kanagawa – were transforming into hybrids. The

Metropolitan Museum broke with its half-a-century tradition of emptiness in 1975 by introducing curatorial staff and an organisation to systematise and amass its collection while it still accommodated the increasing number of art group exhibitions. The Aichi Prefectural Art Museum, while retaining its characteristic as a rental-space museum, started regular purchases of art works from public funds in 1961, and the Museum gradually systematised its collection policies from 1969 onward (Aichi-ken Bijutsukan 1992). It began displaying its acquisitions regularly and launched its original *kikakuten* exhibitions in 1967. The Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art which initially succeeded in excluding the art group exhibitions reluctantly opened its galleries to the "Kenten" exhibition (an annual competitive exhibition sponsored by Kanagawa Prefecture; see 7.1 for a general account of the exhibition), which developed in close relation to the art groups, in 1966, and it was continued until a separate institution for the Kenten and other art group exhibitions was established to take it over in 1975 (Kanagawa-ken Bijutsuten Iinkai, 1997). The Kanagawa Museum also amassed its original collection systematically with the expertise of curatorial staff and opened its first exhibition in 1962. The temporary exhibition of works from the collection became an annual event after the opening of the new building in 1966, and it became more frequent after the annex was built in 1984 (Kanagawa-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan, 1982).

In the course of the intensifying interactions between the curators and the artists associated with the art groups, the Japanese public art museums became increasingly diversified during the museum boom. The curators' project of historicising Japanese modern art began to produce some results. Accordingly, the

"museums of modern art" started to overcome their characteristic emptiness by successfully amassing collections and displaying them. The other type of the empty museums, the one following the tradition of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, became rare, as the increasing number of old and new institutions were staffed with curators and equipped with collections and their exhibition even if they were not necessarily regarded by museologists as sufficient in quantity and quality. At the same time, the art groups were more prosperous than ever, involving an increasing number of members of the affluent middle classes. During this period, Japan enjoyed the most intensive economic boom in its history. The art groups continued to develop as a significant part of museum users even when they could no longer monopolise the museum galleries for themselves, and they started to conflict with museum-based curatorial authority in order to regain access to the museum space from which they had been progressively excluded. Tension arose between the curators and the art groups. And, in the course of interactions in their increasingly strained relationships, the public art museums would develop in new directions during the museum boom after the end of the 1960s.

Chapter 7

Empty Museums during the Museum Boom:

Their Transformation and Diversification

7.1. Introduction

My main concern in this chapter is slightly different from the last two chapters. I do not discuss the establishment of any particular "empty" museums; my focus here is the transformation and diversification of the empty institutions during the museum boom that spanned more than two decades between the end of the 1960s and the early 1990s. This decision may be justified in relation to my earlier consideration on the "discourse" of the empty museum. In Chapter 2, I argued that the "emptiness" of Japanese museums could be neither simply a statement of fact nor an observational description based on actual statistical data about the development of public art museums in post-war Japan. It is a particular form of discourse developed by the Japanese museologists who assume a museum must have certain prerequisite characteristics. "Emptiness" is therefore a way of signalling the "absence" of these elements in the Japanese institutions in comparison to their "ideal" institutions associated with curatorial practices prevalent in the West. It is true that criticisms of the empty museums increased and intensified in the greatest degree during the museum boom. However, if the discourse of the empty museum was certainly characteristic of the boom period, the existence of the empty museum itself goes much further back. It was through the hybridisation of the "purely empty" institutions that these decades were distinguished from any other period of Japanese museum history. For the intensity of the empty museum critique in the academic discipline of Japanese

museology (*hakubutsukangaku*) partly represents the increasingly fierce competitions between the diversity of agents utilising the empty galleries – most typically the art groups – and the museologists/curators/critics who trivialised these claimants and considered the institutions as "empty" and called for their reform. These intensifying conflicts – especially between the art groups and the curators – brought about a variety of "hybrid" institutions through the process of their interactions and negotiations. It is on this type of institution that I focus in this section. In other words, the two types of empty museum which themselves had developed in the course of transculturation went through a further process of hybridisation. Many new empty museums were established during the boom, and many certainly looked at the earlier institutions as their models. However, in the process of the establishment and further development of the regional art museums, these models were modified in relation to the socio-cultural conditions of respective localities.

The conflicts between the two agents based at the regional public art museums – the art groups and the curators – intensified all over Japan after the 1970s. Their quite different values – one informed by art historical perspectives and the other associated with the *iemoto* system – became most evident in the process of reconstruction and construction of the museums throughout the 1970s and 80s. Such institutions included the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts (Tochigi-kenritsu Bijutsukan [栃木県立美術館], 1972), the Hokkaido Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (Hokkaido-ritsu Kindai Bijutsukan [北海道立近代美術館], 1977), the Yamaguchi Prefectural Art Museum (Yamaguchi-kenritsu Bijutsukan [山口県立美術館], 1979), the Toyama Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (Toyama-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan [富山県立近代美術館], 1981), and the Shizuoka Prefectural Art Museum

(Shizuoka-kenritsu Bijutsukan [静岡県立美術館], 1986). The most controversial of them was the case of the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts in the early 1980s, on which I focus in this chapter.

The Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts was established in Utsunomiya City (宇都宮市), the seat of the prefectural government of Tochigi (栃木県) and approximately 100 kilometre north of Tokyo, in 1972. It was the first public institution to follow the examples of Kanagawa and Tokyo (National) founded in the early 1950s.[1] Its management was left to the "curators" under the leadership of Assistant Director Oshima Seiji (大島清次),[2] and its founding principle clearly forbade "art groups" to hold their exhibitions in its galleries. Although it started as an "empty" institution without permanent galleries and substantial collections, the Tochigi Museum made constant efforts to overcome its emptiness by committing itself to historicising Japanese modern art through researches and temporary exhibitions. In the mid-1970s, the first official conversation was held between the Museum, represented by Assistant Director Oshima, and a group of local artists, most of whom were associated with art groups, over the management and curatorial policies of the Museum (see Watanabe 1998, 17–18). Their friction finally evolved into the so-called "Tochigi Problem" ("Tochigiken bijutsukan mondai" 「栃木県美術館問題」) at the end of 1982, a decade after the opening of the Museum. This problem involved a series of incidents and a wide range of issues. It was inaugurated in December 1982 by the controversy between the Museum and local artists over the timing of the annual exhibition of local artists ("Kenten" 「県展」) which was held annually in the Museum

---

[1] Prior to the Tochigi Museum, two prefectural museums of modern art were established in Hyogo and Wakayama in 1970. However, they both accommodated art group exhibitions while holding *kikakuten* exhibitions organised by the museum-based curators.

[2] See Footnote 25 in 2.3 for his biographical details.

and came to a provisional end when Oshima, who had been promoted to Director, was forced to resign his post in spring 1984. This period of just over a year and a quarter was the most fractious, although a series of events had already taken place before and the problem has not yet been solved completely. The initial issue over the timing of the Kenten developed into slanderous criticisms of Director Oshima, conflicts over the judgement of the triennial competitive exhibition sponsored by the Museum (Kita-Kanto Bijutsuten [北関東美術展]), and a corruption case involving the Museum over the purchase of certain art objects. A wide range of people and institutions were also involved: the Museum (Director Oshima and other curators), the Prefectural Governor, the Prefectural Board of Education, and local artists who were divided into three groups (see 7.2), and they debated these diverse issues through a variety of "platforms" including newspapers (local and national), journals, other publications with a very small circulation, formal and informal meetings, and the prefectural assembly.

In the case of Tochigi and many other prefectures, the organisation representing the regional art groups – as a counterpoint to museum-based curators – was the so-called "Kenten" (「県展」) exhibition. In the last chapter, I argued that regional groups of artists in post-war Japan developed in close relation to the art groups based in Tokyo. In Nagoya, the increasing number of regional groups which developed the art world associated with the *iemoto* system contributed to the establishment of the Aichi Prefectural Art Museum following the style of the Metropolitan Museum. In Kanagawa, local artists were more directly connected to the Tokyo art groups because of its geographical position, and they developed their art world associated with the *iemoto* system outside the Kanagawa Museum in Kamakura, either in Tokyo or

Yokohama. However, throughout the 1950s and 60s, the Kenten – the annual exhibition sponsored by each prefecture – became increasingly important to artists in provinces as the most comprehensive, "official" exhibition of the region.[3] Just as the national "official" exhibition (the Bunten/Nitten) did, the official sphere of prefectural art developed in relation to the *iemoto* system associated with the local art groups. The world of art groups both in Tokyo and provincial cities thrived more than ever before as they involved an increasingly affluent population – 90% of whom regarded themselves as "middle class" ("*chusan-kaikyu*" 「中産階級」) in 1976 – sustained by the rapidly and continuously growing economy. Those middle-classes provided the art groups with a substantial resource as both amateur disciples and audience. The roles of the amateur middle-classes became increasingly important to the development of the art groups and their cultural fields both in Tokyo and other cities during the economy boom.

The world of curators had also developed since their profession was officially created by the Museum Law and the first institution where they took leadership was established in Kanagawa in 1951. Their national qualifications were obtained by an increasing number of university students who completed the curator's course, and their employment opportunities expanded as more institutions – both old and new, public and private – required their specialist knowledge. Even the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum opened its door to curatorial staff, led by Chief Curator Asahi Akira (朝日晃),[4] for the first time in its fifty-year history in 1975. The

---

[3] The origin and development of the Kenten exhibitions remains unknown today. Some of them started as early as in the 1930s, but no study has yet fully investigated to what extent they developed before the War and how they were resumed and reintroduced after the War.

[4] Asahi was a art-history graduate of Waseda University (see 6.1), who joined the curatorial staff of the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (see Chapter 6) on its

development of the curators' world was also closely connected to the development of museology in post-war Japan. As I showed in Chapter 2, Japanese museology (*hakubutsukangaku*) characteristically evolved in close relation with the curators' course at university. The development of this discipline was by no means independent of the growing criticisms of the empty museums in the 1970s and 80s. It was only in this disciplinary framework that demands to employ more curators, to recognise their importance, and to make them responsible for the formation of substantial and systematic collection could be made. The curators thus became a threatening force to the long-standing predominance of art groups.

My discussion in this chapter focuses on the processes of the subsequent transformation of Japanese art museums which resulted from negotiations and struggles between agents within the Japanese art field whose properties were the results of a historical process of transculturation. As I argued in the previous chapters, both the art groups and the curators were interest groups in the public art museums and active agencies in the Japanese art field, which themselves were developed in the process of transculturation. These groups/agencies which were further hybridised in the socio-cultural context of different prefectures brought about the localised conditions of the prefectural art fields which developed complex and diverse characteristics of the regional art museums.

7.2. The Tochigi Problem

From the very beginning of its planning stage, the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts belonged to the type of the "museum of modern art", following the

---

establishment. He then moved to the Metropolitan Museum to launch its project for systematic collection and displays based on curatorial expertise.

examples of Kanagawa and Tokyo (National) founded in the early 1950s. In fact, there was a persistent opinion held by its preparation committee that it should be called specifically a "museum of modern art" ("*kindai bijutsukan*"), but this proposal had to be discarded in consideration of the broader functions the art museum was expected to carry out in a situation in which there was no other public museum of any kind in the prefecture.[5] The process through which the project for the Museum was executed in Tochigi was quite similar to that in Kanagawa. There was a group of local art specialists who suggested the project (a salon of cultured men including Hamada Shoji [浜田庄治, 1894–1978], a world-famous potter who played an important role in the arts and crafts movement in Japan),[6] those who were in a high position in the local government office enthusiastically supporting the plan (in this case, Governor Yokokawa Nobuo [横川信夫] and Lieutenant Governor Ogiyama Yoshio [荻山義夫]), and, most significantly Curator Oshima Seiji with a strong personality who was entrusted with its actual practice and who recruited other members of the curatorial staff. The relationships between these three sections of people were incestuous; Hamada and Governor Yokokawa both belonged to the same cultural salon and it was Hamada himself who dragged Oshima into the Museum scheme. Lieutenant Governor Ogiyama became concurrently the Director of the Museum, and Oshima, who substantially ran the Museum, became Assistant Director. Consequently, the Museum became an institution led by curators and art critics. The first members of its steering committee were selected exclusively from a shortlist of curators and art critics, including Hijikata from the Kanagawa Museum and three nominees from the

---

5 From my interviews with Aoki (2001), Oshima (2001), and Takeyama (2001).

6 According to Aoki (2001), the salon of "cultured men" was bonded not by particularly a "high-cultural" activity but by *mah-jongg* (a popular gambling game originated in China).

National Museums of Modern Art in Tokyo and Kyoto, and eminent art critics in Tokyo (Tochigi-ken 1971). 7 experts were employed as founding members of the curatorial staff, including Takeyama Hirohiko (竹山博彦) who had studied fine art at a university in Tokyo and Yaguchi Kunio (矢口國夫) who later became the Head Curator of the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Contemporary Art (Tokyo-to Gendai Bijutsukan [東京都現代美術館], 1993). The new museum successfully excluded the art group exhibition by declaring that it would not hold any exhibition unless it was sponsored by the Museum itself. Even the Kenten exhibition was not accepted unconditionally; its organisation had to be restructured to a certain extent before it was allowed access to the Museum galleries in the early 1970s (see 7.3). Like the older institutions of modern art, the Tochigi Museum organised a series of temporary exhibitions of modern art in Japan and other countries, based on the original researches of its curatorial staff.

The same question arises here as in the case of Kanagawa in the last chapter: Why did not the art groups in the region fight for their use of the new art museum? To answer this, I first look into the circumstances of the art world in Utsunomiya City and Tochigi Prefecture before the opening of the Art Museum. In Tochigi, the largest and oldest institution for competitive exhibitions was the Kenten – the prefectural art exhibition – initially sponsored by the education officials of the prefectural government. The exhibition was a part of the prefectural "Art Festival" (*geijutsusai* [芸術祭]) which ranged from classical concerts by renowned musicians to the drama performances by high school students.[7] The state authorities launched the national Art Festival in Tokyo in 1950, but this prefectural festival had nothing to do with the

---

[7] For the details of the history of the Kenten, see Tochigi-ken Geijutsu Tochigi Kankokai 1967 and Tochigi-ken 1983b.

national project at least when it started in 1947. It was purely a prefectural project with a small amount of funds raised from a prefectural budget, supported by the committee consisting of local volunteers. In the next few decades, most prefectures all over the country came to organise their prefectural festival of visual and performing arts; but in 1947 no prefecture except Tokyo, Osaka, and Tochigi held it. The art world in Tochigi had developed to a certain degree through the annual prefectural exhibition by the end of the decade. As the scale of the exhibition grew, the shortage of the wall space and the lack of a decent public exhibition gallery became serious problems. Since the Tochigi Hall (Tochigi Kaikan [栃木会館]) – a cultural complex including a concert hall and a gallery – was established in 1955, its exhibition space on the first floor was the main site for the Kenten. The prefectural exhibition was divided into three periods according to categories throughout October and November and the painting sections restricted the size of works, but the space shortage still troubled the organisers (*Shimotsuke Shinbun* 10 February 1983; Yoshimura 1970). They expected that the new art museum would solve those problems of exhibition spaces (Kikuchi 1983, 18–19). However, the Museum had no rental gallery open for public use and refused to accommodate any exhibition organised by outside bodies. Even the "prefectural" exhibition – the Kenten – was refused; the Museum demanded from the Kenten officials the right to co-sponsor the exhibition and it was rejected (Tochigi-ken 1983b, 40–41).

Why did the Museum thus manage to exclude the local artists? One reason was that the artists were convinced that they would be able to have another gallery space separate from the Art Museum in the near future. Unfortunately, there is no documented evidence for this plan; but both Oshima and Takeyama mention it in their

interviews as a forgotten consensus made at the preparation committee (Oshima 2001; Takeyama 2001). Another reason was the forceful strategy of the Museum to realise its ideals. It achieved this through the appointment of Lieutenant Governor as Director. According to Oshima (2001) who worked directly under the Lieutenant Governor, this appointment was crucial in allowing him a certain freedom and authority within the bureaucracy of local government where Oshima himself could claim no power for himself as an ex-teacher of a local high school. Fully backed by the most powerful figure in local authorities, Oshima could make his own way in the Museum project.

The rental gallery plan for the Kenten and other group exhibitions did not materialise. In the early 1980s, the Kenten still made demands on the Prefectural Art Museum, which still refused to accommodate any group exhibition. The local artists had to depend on the department stores in the city. The management policy of the Museum did not change at all over the decade; its galleries were still occupied by the curators led by Oshima who had been promoted to the Directorship by then. In 1982, there was only one local artist among ten trustees and none in the steering committee; those positions were predominantly taken by art critics and the persons concerned with the art museums in other prefectures (*Bijutsu Journal* 25 December 1982, 4). Moreover, in the same year, the Museum completed its extension of the building; but the new galleries were devoted to the permanent displays of the Museum collection. It was at this point that the discontent on the part of the local artists exploded to bring about a series of issues and events commonly called "Tochigi Problem".

As I argued in Section 1, the "Tochigi Problem" was a complex and persistent

case, whose most intensive period spanned from the issue of the season of the Kenten exhibition at the end of 1982 to the retirement (euphemistically) of Oshima, Director of the Museum, in the spring of 1984. Here I clarify two particular aspects of this controversial case for my later discussion of the two parties that represented the two conflicting powers in the post-war museum space.

First, I attempt a more precise definition of who "the two parties concerned" were in the Tochigi case. As I have just suggested, the Tochigi case would be taken as the most distinctive example of the controversy between curators (or art critics) and local artists which were prevalent all over Japan in those days. It is relatively easy to define the former – they were the curators, in this case, of the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts. However, the so-called "local artists" are extremely ambiguous in the sense that this term does not necessarily indicate any specific qualification or membership of any institutions. Nonetheless it is obvious that the local artists would not include all the artists living locally; they were only a part of those who were called or organised themselves as *the* artists in the region. In the process of the conflict, we can identify at least three groups of the local artists in Utsunomiya City; the Tochigi Association of Artists (Tochigi-ken Bijutsu Sakka Kyokai [栃木県美術作家協会]),[8] the Tochigi League of Artists (Tochigi-ken Bijutsu Sakka Renmei [栃木県美術作家連盟]), and the Roundtable for Considering Art in the Region (Chiiki-no Bijutsu-wo Kangaeru Konwakai [地域の美術を考える懇話会]).[9] The last two bodies were founded especially

---

[8] The Tochigi Association of Artists established in 1976 consisted of eighty three members in 1983. This group did not contribute much to the controversy.

[9] The Roundtable for Considering the Art in the Region was founded in May 1983, two month after their counterpart, the Tochigi League of Artists, was established. Although the Roundtable emphasised its neutrality between the Museum and the League (eg. *Shimotsuke Shinbun* 8 May 1983), its founding statement mostly contained the items to defend the standpoint of the Museum and to attack the views of the "artists" (*Shimotsuke Shinbun* 7 May 1983)..

in response to the "Tochigi Problem", representing the conflicting positions of the local artists over this matter. They were both purely political groups. The League initially disguised itself as an "ordinary" art group to organise exhibitions of the works of its members (*Shimotsuke Shinbun* 6 March 1983), but it never organised any exhibition and its main purpose was evidently to criticise the Museum. The Roundtable did not even focus on its group exhibition as its basic policy. It was to the Tochigi League of Artists that the local artists who shared a critical view of the Museum belonged; and I shall focus on this group in the next section.

This group originated in a dozen of the eminent local artists who were the members of the Steering Committee for the Kenten exhibition. Prior to the foundation of the group, they had complained that the Kenten exhibition should be moved from December – when many people are too busy to go to art exhibition – to October and November – the best season for art and culture.[10] This triggered a series of criticisms and slanders of the Museum, involving different kinds of media and a wide range of people. The president of the League was Yoneda Kan (米阪寛, 1917–), who was a Japanese-style painter and eminent member of the Nitten exhibition. According to a contemporary source, more than 200 locally-based artists in six major categories (Japanese-style painters, Western-style painters, sculptors, craftsmen, calligraphers, and photographers) participated in its inauguration, which made it the largest group of artists in the prefecture (*Shimotsuke Shinbun* 6 March 1983). The number of the members actually varies in different sources, and an insider later wrote

---

[10] In Japan, December is called "*Shiwasu*" which literally means "running teachers or masters" indicating that everybody is so busy that even self-composed teachers would run about. Although Christmas is not celebrated, the end of the year and the beginning of the new year are traditionally taken seriously. Autumn was considered as the most artistic and cultural time of the year at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum in the 1920s (see Chapter 6); and this belief has not changed at all ever since.

that some people seemed to have been listed as its members without knowing what kind of group it was and that they withdrew from the League soon after (Watanabe 1998). Therefore, it cannot be asserted that the League consisted of the majority of the local artists or of the powerful members of the Kenten exhibition. All I can state here is that it contained the most vocal portion of the local artists.

I identify one particular event among the various incidents of the "Tochigi Problem" for my close examination on the conflict between curators and "local artists" in the next section. The event I focus on is the issue of the Kita-Kanto art exhibition. This triennial competitive exhibition started in 1974 as a principal project of the Museum. It was a unique exhibition in Japan at that time in every respect. It invited contributions from contemporary artists from three neighbouring prefectures in the Kita-Kanto (北関東; North Kanto) area, including Tochigi, Gumma (群馬), and Ibaragi (茨城). Its categories of art were different from the conventional categories of Japanese-style paintings, Western-style paintings, and sculptures, etc.; it consisted of three categories – A. two-dimensional works, B. three-dimensional works, and C. other creative works associated with our contemporary life (Tochigi-kenritsu Bijutsukan 1977b; 1980; 1983). The prize money for the winner was ¥1,000,000 (£5,000), an unprecedented amount for a prize offered by a regional public institution. And, unlike the Kenten and other exhibitions, it did not accept any unjudged works and the entry was free of charge.

There are two reasons for considering this exceptional exhibition and the controversy it occasioned. One is that a chain of severe criticisms of the Kita-Kanto exhibition were the most extensive and consistent of all the comments and actions made by the local artists against the Museum. Oshima summarised those criticisms

against the exhibition into four points in his article in the catalogue of its fourth exhibition early in 1983. The first point was the criticism against the extension of the subject area from three neighbouring prefectures (as mentioned above) to five (adding Saitama and Fukushima) in that year. Why did it have to be extended, when it was already unacceptable that the public money of Tochigi was spent to support artists of other prefectures? Second, why was the amount of the prize doubled from that year when the overall budget of local authorities became tighter? Third, why did the maximum prize for the Kenten exhibition – co-sponsored by the Museum and the prefectural organisation – remain no more than ¥50,000 (£250)? This issue was raised so as to prove that the Museum made light of the Kenten and the local artists. Finally, the judgement at the Kita-Kanto exhibition was biased because of its committee members, occupied by the art critics from the centre, who preferred the avant-garde and abstract to representational works (see 7.4). In fact, the establishment of the Tochigi League of Artists was induced crucially by this article by Oshima defending his position against the criticisms by the "local artists". Compared to this campaign against the Kita-Kanto exhibition, most other incidents seem no more than impromptu actions or childish revenges which did not develop much further. For instance, it is commonly regarded as a proof of the seriousness and distinction of the Tochigi case that it was brought into the prefectural assembly. However, the main issue raised there – the suspicion over three acquisitions of the Museum[11] – was scandalous enough to stir up the situation and consequently to expel the leader of the enemy – Director Oshima, but it was proved to be a false accusation without any

---

[11] At the Tochigi Prefectural Assembly in July 1983, several members of the assembly spoke and questioned about the process in which three sets of works of Japanese modern art were purchased by the Museum. They were suspicious about their prices paid by the Museum and suggested the irregularities on its part. For details, see Tochigi-ken 1983a.

concrete evidence. A contemporary newspaper observed:

> The inquirers may have been really excited about this, choosing the right moment just after a year since those who now belong to the League of Artists gave their voice against the Art Museum. In practice, however, the inquiries did not go beyond the one-sided pursuit of the "injustice" maintained by the League of Artists. The evident lack in the preparatory research on the part of the legislators and the glimpse of the intention of the League behind their speech gave an impression as if the fairness and independence of the assembly wavered. [*Shimotsuke Shinbun* 17 July 1983]

The second reason for focusing on the Kita-Kanto exhibition was that the exhibition symbolised the museum world which Oshima and his circle constructed positively to exclude the vocal part of the local artists. In the poignant words of those artists, the exhibition represented the "aloofness", "self-righteousness", and "prejudice" of the Museum.[12] For them, the accessibility of the Museum meant that they ought to be able to exhibit their own works easily – without being restricted by the professionalism of the curators. In this respect, the policy of the Museum management was absolutely biased, depriving the local artists of a right to access. However, from the curator's point of view, their demand for access could be seen as their selfish demand "for the priority and privilege over the usage of the Prefectural Art Museum as a place to exhibit their works" (Abe 1984). Another contemporary source described this conflict as one between the egoism of local artists and the monopoly of the Museum (*Shin Bijutsu Shinbun* 21 May 1984). However we describe it, it was a conflict over access to the Museum space which had been occupied by the curators since its opening a decade before. Nonetheless, it was not only a problem of priority over the use of space; it was not the kind of problem which might have been

---

[12] For the example of those criticisms, see two editions of *Bijutsu Journal* printed in December 1982 (*Bijutsu Journal* 8 December 1982; 25 December 1982). They are explicitly hostile to the management of the Tochigi Art Museum and full of those sarcastic words.

solved by sharing the space between the two conflicting parties or by establishing a new space exclusively for the exhibitions of the local artists. The problem was deeply rooted in the structural differences between the two worlds where those two parties existed. Their conflict indicated their different views on the art museum and "art" itself. The Kita-Kanto exhibition represented one viewpoint while the Kenten represented the other.

7.3. The Kenten Exhibition (Prefectural Exhibition) and the Art Group System

> I supported and pushed forward those who were complaining about their unjustly underprivileged positions. Then, they have become *Emperors* [italics mine] themselves. It is absolutely unforgivable. We must reorganise the Art Festival again . . . [A statement of Takauchi Sosuke in Tochigi-ken Bunka Kyokai 1997, 57]

The power structure of the Kenten exhibition is evidently represented in the response of the Kenten organisers (including local artists and prefectural authorities) to the proposal for the reorganisation of the exhibition presented by the Tochigi Museum which had just opened in the year before. It was actually the Kenten officials that first requested the Museum to allow their annual exhibition to be held there. The Museum made several conditions for accepting it; and the Kenten again responded to it by amending some of the conditions presented by the Museum. The officials insisted on two points against the Museum's proposal (see Tochigi-ken 1983b, 40–41). One was to preserve the character of the exhibition as a festival rather than to turn it into a strict competitive exhibition for new artists. The other concerned the personnel of the hanging committee. While the Museum proposed that no local artist should be included, the Kenten persisted in arguing for the possible involvement of the local artists. These two points where the interests of those two parties contradicted most intensively were crucial in determining the character of the annual prefectural

exhibition as a successor to the art group system.

What makes an art exhibition a festival? In the last chapter, I showed that the art group exhibitions in Tokyo and other cities in the 1950s were rapidly turned into festivals without any common artistic creeds shared among the members of each group (see 6.2). The scale of each exhibition which was sarcastically described as the "Star Festival" by a contemporary critic became larger and larger with the increasing number of exhibits in order to display its power in the art world, to attract more audience, and to gain more amateur contributors. It seems that a severe competition among the growing number of group exhibitions over popularity and financial benefits compelled the art groups to develop their character in the way they did; but in the case of Tochigi, the festive character was apparently and deliberately preserved by the Kenten organisers. For this purpose, the organisers defended the twenty invited contributions in each section against the Museum which suggested that all the exhibits without exception should be winners of the competition. This invitation was usually given to living local masters whose works added to the grandeur of the most authoritative exhibition in the prefecture. Moreover, the Kenten was decisively inclined to amateurism – which was one of the major characteristics of the art groups (see 6.2) – in contrast to the Museum maintaining strict professionalism as "a gateway to success for new artists". Declining the Museum's suggestion of making it a more selective competitive exhibition, its organisers continued to accept a large number of competitors. In 1982, the ratio of the winners to entrants was 53.2%, which was more than a five-percent increase on the year before.[13] The accepted works counted more than three hundred across six categories (Japanese-style painting, European-style

---

[13] The figures are taken from Sugawara 1984, 156–57 and Tochigi-ken 1983b, 41.

painting, sculpture, arts and crafts, calligraphy, photography). Certainly the festival was kept and promoted by the Kenten organisers in Utsunomiya partly for the same reasons as the art groups in Tokyo, but it was also a condition which was essential to maintain the power structure of the organisers. The invitation system allowed what Takauchi (1984b) sarcastically called a "grand master"[14] to secure a spot for his/her work at the most prestigious exhibition in the prefecture without going through the selection by the hanging committee. According to Takauchi, the grand master typically had succeeded in major art group exhibitions mostly in Tokyo once or twice, was not good enough to be accepted as a full member of those groups, and was well respected in the local community. However, the master was tired of the nerve-racking process of acceptance and rejection at competitive exhibitions, because he/she as a grand master would be most embarrassed if his/her works weren't accepted. The invitation system was very convenient for those grand masters to keep up appearances as active artists and infallible masters. Keeping a room for amateur artists was also crucial for the maintenance of the system homologous with the art group system. Under the *iemoto* master-disciple relationship, the master was obliged to respond to the dedication of his/her disciples; and the public exhibition of their works was naturally the most appreciated reward. This system could not be maintained only by a small number of professionally motivated artists; as I showed in the last chapter, it required the increasing number of amateur artists.

The second point – the system through which the members of the hanging committee were selected – is more obviously and directly related to the maintenance of power. The Museum proposed that two artists and two art critics both from other

---

[14] In Takauchi's term, "*erai sensei*" (「偉い先生」).

prefectures should be included in the five members of the committee in each category and that they all should be selected by the Museum; but the Kenten organisers refused this proposal completely and demanded their own say in the choice of the committee members, proposing four artists living in Tochigi and one artist from another prefecture. This personnel system apparently allowed the "local artists" – neither the artists outside the region, art critics, nor curators – the entire right of decision at the committee; and not only that but the system also retained the power structure associated with the "Emperor" which Takauchi was indignant at in the quotation at the beginning of this section. The Art Festival he was referring to was the one he himself was involved with as Vice President of the Tochigi Association of Art Festival in 1985. He had already conducted another reorganisation programme in 1974, but both reform projects only succeeded in replacing one set of minor emperors (or *iemoto* masters) by another. In 1983, the Tochigi Association of Artists demanded that a particular article in the Rules of the Steering Committee for the Art Exhibition of the Tochigi Prefectural Art Festival be abolished (see Kobayashi 1997, 10–11). The article in question read: "The committee member's tenure of office is from the day he/she is appointed to the end of March in the year after; but he/she may be reappointed" (art.3.2). The document prepared by the Association to present to the Steering Committee frankly pointed out the abuses of the article as follows:

> In a certain section of the art exhibition, there has been no change in the members of the committee since 1976 [*sic.*].[15] This fact led its management to mannerism, and the tendencies of favouritism and self-complacency may be witnessed. Although we are reluctant to jump to a conclusion that the prolonged tenure of office has stiffened its constitution, it would be very common under such a situation that a kind of sectionalism should occur and that people should be likely "to draw water only to their own rice fields" whether they intend it or not. [Kobayashi 1997, 11]

The constitution of the Kenten described here bears a close resemblance to that of the art group exhibitions in Tokyo. A handful of *iemoto* emperors who shouldered the master-disciple system took the lead in the exhibition; they established their authorities in the organisation which allowed them to do so.

The Kenten developed the art world, similar to that of the art groups, in Utsunomiya. The Kenten itself was a composite exhibition which – at least in theory – accepted works regardless of the groups their artist belonged to; but, like the official exhibition (Bunten/Teiten) consisting of various *iemoto* groups, it became virtually an art group itself in its power structure and organisation by forming the so-called "Kenten group of artists". Furthermore, the prefectural exhibition was closely related to the Tokyo art groups. The eminent members of the Kenten consisted mainly of the artists whose works had been accepted by the group exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum. In fact, the comprehensive replacement of the committee members in 1974 was meant to reinforce the connection between the provincial and the "central" exhibitions. The relatively minor artists who lived on a few minor awards at the Tokyo exhibitions at the beginning of their career were removed from the Steering and Hanging Committees, and the more important artists related to Tochigi Prefecture who had established reputations in Tokyo were invited to take the positions

---

[15] This date is regarded as a mistake of 1974, the year in which this reorganisation of the Committee was actually carried out.

(Tochigi-ken Kyoiku Iinkai 1997, 55).

Nonetheless, the Kenten of Tochigi also developed localised characteristics in relation to the particular context of the prefectural cultural fields of the 1980s. Despite its similarities to that of the Tokyo art groups, it by no means simply succumbed to the art world of the national capital. I note two conflicting aspects of the contemporary circumstances in which the Kenten evolved early in this decade. One is the whole sphere of the Tochigi Prefectural Art Festival, a part of which was the prefectural art exhibition. As I pointed out briefly in the previous sections, the Kenten exhibition was a section of the largest event of art and culture in Tochigi which covered various types of music (Japanese and Western classics, Japanese folk songs, etc.), stage performances (drama, ballet, *kabuki*, etc.), literary arts (essay, poetry, *haiku*, etc.), and others (flower arrangement [*ikebana*], tea ceremony [*sado*], film, etc.). The *iemoto* system was by no means peculiar to the fine art section of the festival; it prevailed in other sections though it may not have been as intense as in the fine arts. For example, various forms of traditional arts, such as tea ceremony, flower arrangement, Japanese dancing, and *tanka* (Japanese short verse), participated in the Kenten exhibition and naturally revealed its quality of the Emperor system based on their *iemoto* schools (see Chapter 5). In each category, several existing "schools" and associations struggled for power to obtain the most prestigious opportunity for the public display of their works in the prefecture (Tochigi-ken 1983b, 21–22). In 1977, the combined section of tea ceremony and flower arrangement reorganised itself according to the region; different schools in the same region belonged to its regional association of tea ceremony and flower arrangement, which was a part of the prefectural association (ibid., 19, 22). Since this reorganisation, the names of the

schools have never been mentioned either in the tickets or the captions at the Kenten; but the school system remained. Indeed this reform did not even intend to abolish the *iemoto* system of the traditional artistic schools. Although their internal conflicts did not develop as dramatically as in the case of fine art, a persistent power structure still existed within the Kenten. Takauchi extended his accusation against the "new" Emperor after the reorganisation of the Art Festival via an address to a poet who had gained power in exactly the same way. He says:

> I have launched the reorganisation of the Art Festival because that man asked me to do so, and then he himself became the Emperor of poetry. He is doing exactly the same thing. . . . He declared that nobody else would be good enough to be appointed to the member of the judging committee. After making the direct appeal to me that the same person should not become a judge or a member of the steering committee year after year. I cannot bear to hear him say anything like that. [Tochigi-ken Bunka Kyokai 1997, 29]

Thus the whole system of the Prefectural Art Festival conformed to the *iemoto* system; and the Kenten exhibition constituted an important part of that system.

The second point I make here concerns the wider context of the art world that counteracted the art group system. The Kenten was not only a part of the Art Festival but also a part of the expanding and differentiating world of fine art. As I discussed in the previous chapters, the art field (i.e. the field of contemporary painting and sculpture) had been composed almost exclusively of the artists participating in the art group exhibitions since the first public art museum opened in Tokyo in 1926. The personal history of an artist was invariably told by what awards he/she won at group and other exhibitions, which groups he/she was most involved in, and which master he/she studied under; and the history of Japanese modern art consisted of a list of those artists and groups. It was the most obvious way to construct a historical narrative of the art world in modern Japan; the list certainly represented the most

powerful and authorised individuals and groups, and it was true in a certain degree of the narratives of the post-war art history. One piece of evidence most appropriate to my argument here is a brief history of art in Tochigi in the *Catalogue of the Permanent Exhibition of the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts* published in 1981 (Tochigi-kenritsu Bijutsukan 1981). Every artist after the Meiji era was mentioned in his/her relation to art groups and other competitive exhibitions ranging from the Tokyo Metropolitan Exposition for the Encouragement of Industry in 1907 to the Kita-Kanto Art Exhibition launched by the Tochigi Museum itself in the mid-1970s (ibid., 2). However, by the early 1980s, the art world in Japan was diversified to such an extent that the art groups and their participants could no longer represent "the most powerful and authorised" of all. As Takauchi (1984b) pointed out, since the 1960s it had been reconstituted by the increasing number of the artists who did not belong to any particular group and those who were recognised at the "Independent" exhibitions. It was characteristic of the period that the exhibitions which were not based on the art group system developed to become a foothold of the avant-garde. Particularly the Japan International Art Exhibition (Tokyo Biennale) (Tokyo Kokusai Bijutsuten [東京国際美術展], 1952–) and two "Indépendent" exhibitions – the Nippon Indépendent (Nippon Andepandan-ten [日本アンデパンダン展], 1946–) and the Yomiuri Indépendent (Yomiuri Andepandan-ten [読売アンデパンダン展], 1949–63)[16] played an important role nationwide by sending a number of talents out into the art world. They were the antitheses of the competitive exhibitions by art groups; especially the "Independent" exhibitions explicitly protested against the art group conventions. They both criticised the power politics and sectionalism of the

---

[16] Regarding the Yomiuri Indépendent, see 6.2.

art group exhibitions and promoted the ideal of "No Judgement, No Award, Free Exhibit" (「無審査、無賞、自由出品」). In fact, the Japan Independent was a direct reaction to the failure of the "democratisation" of the Nitten by the 151 members of the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kai [日本美術会]). Those alternative exhibitions were also closely related to the curators and art critics who appreciated and wrote a lot about those exhibitions. For instance, the founding members of the Japan Art Association included Hijikata Teiichi, then an eminent art critic and later the central figure in the establishment of the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art. The Kita-Kanto exhibition may be regarded as a provincial answer to those cross-group exhibitions which offered a sphere alternative to the conventional competitive exhibitions.

In such circumstances, the Kenten system which had been created in close relations with the capital art group exhibitions was destabilised. And the absolutism of the members of the League of Artists who dominated the Kenten and their power structure was in danger. The increasing number of the artists who were not totally dependent on the Kenten and art group system made themselves conspicuous for their talent in the art world of Tochigi. Those who were independent of any art group included a Japanese-style painter well-known abroad, Tsukahara Tetsuo (塚原哲夫, 1933–),[17] and a young talent of the Western-style painting at the time, Miyasaka Ken (宮坂健, 1949–), whose works were accepted for the Kita-Kanto exhibitions (1979, 1983).[18] The Kita-Kanto exhibitions succeeded in engaging some promising young artists; Ushikubo Kenichi (丑久保健一, 1947–), a sculptor, was elected as proper

---

[17] Tsukahara is now Professor at Hakuoh University.

[18] Before being accepted for the Kita-Kanto exhibition, Miyasaka launched his career as member of an unofficial group in Tokyo, the Ogen-kai exhibition (established in 1933). However, he left the group and has been an independent artist ever since.

member of the Modern Art Association after he won the first prize at the first Kita-Kanto exhibition in 1974, and Fujiwara Ikuzo (藤原郁三, 1946–) whose ceramic work was accepted at its fourth exhibition keeps his own pottery in Mashiko City (益子市)[19] and has been a member of the Shin Seisaku Association (Shin Seisaku Kyokai [新制作協会]) [20] since 1989. What is significant here is the fact that none of those artists belonged to the League of Artists. Moreover, it was not only those "independent", "anti-art-group" artists who did not share the sense of impending crisis in the Kenten system but also those who had already been recognised as eminent figures in the prefectural art world by taking up important positions in the central art group exhibitions. Those artists included Matsumoto Tetsuo (松本哲男, 1943–) – a member of the Japan Academy of Art (Japanese-style painting), Seki Masayuki (関雅之) and Soga Yoshiko (曽我芳子, 1921–) of the Niki Kai (Western-style painting), and Kasuya Keiji (粕谷圭司) of the Kokuga Kai (国画会). Some of them were active members of the groups opposing to the League, the Roundtable, or the Association. Tsukahara and Matsumoto were executive members of the Roundtable, and Seki chaired the Association. Takauchi (1984b) ridiculed the situation where none of those promising artists participated in the League and sarcastically showed his sympathy to its leader, Yoneda, who was a leading figure in painting circles. Those who were left with Yoneda were neither the new type of artists relatively independent of the art group system nor the artists who succeeded in that convention. So, who

---

19 Mashiko in Tochigi Prefecture has been for its pottery (Mashiko ware) since the late nineteenth century. It became the base of the Japanese arts and crafts movement in the early twentieth century, and it has developed as one of the most important centres of Japanese pottery.

20 This group was established in 1936 initially by young Western-style painters. Sculptors joined it in 1939, and after World War II seven architects – including Tange Kenzo and Maekawa Kunio – formed a prototype of the current "Space Design" section, then the Japanese-style painting was added, to become a comprehensive art group.

were those insisting most earnestly on the preservation of the Kenten system? They were the so-called "grand masters" whom I mentioned earlier in this section.

> It is true that in the painting circles in our prefecture the painting career of one artist has been judged on whether he/she was accepted by the competitive exhibitions of art groups in Tokyo for forty years since the end of the war. In the province, one could have been well respected as "grand master" even if he/she were merely an exhibitor or an associate member and not a member proper. Needless to say, those people were elected as members of the steering committee and the hanging committee of the Tochigi Art Festival. However, those "grand masters" are utterly obscure in Tokyo. [Takauchi 1984b]

For those "unknown grand masters", the Kenten was the only and last fortress to secure their power. They dared not break with the old system, and they could not be confident enough to aim at a belated success in the capital art groups. They had no other option but to stay where they were.

Thus the Kenten of Tochigi developed through its relations with the art group system associated with the Tokyo art groups and the temporally and geographically specific conditions of the prefectural cultural fields. The Kenten artists formed a world of artistic practices that was mutually related to but also distinguished from the world of art groups in Tokyo and other cities in the 1950s which I examined in the last chapter.

7.4. The Kita-Kanto Bijutsuten (North Kanto Art Exhibition) and the Curator's World

The purpose of this section is to discuss the opponent of the Kenten, the Kita-Kanto Bijutsuten (North Kanto Art Exhibition), which was put on by the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts. In the last section, I focused on the Kenten and its links to the world of the art groups; in this section, then, I examine how the Kita-Kanto exhibition was related to the world of the curators which I analysed in the last chapter. The Kita-Kanto exhibition was developed by the curators based in the

Tochigi Museum who shared general interests with their counterparts in the Kanagawa Museum but who, at the same time, had specific concerns associated with the socio-cultural conditions specific to the locality.

The Kita-Kanto Bijutsuten was a triennial exhibition sponsored by the Museum. First, I examine its system in comparison to the Kenten exhibition. In fact, the differences between those two exhibitions became the points at issue when their conflict escalated in the early 1980s; because the system of the Kita-Kanto exhibition undermined the power structure established by the Kenten exhibition. The former was strictly a competitive exhibition without any invitation, which meant that any contributors including the "grand masters" would be equally judged by the hanging committee (see 7.3). Its main purpose was to scout for new talents, not to hold annual festivities for local artists. Its subject area was extended significantly; while the Kenten – as a "prefectural" exhibition – naturally was restricted to those who were born or lived in the prefecture, the Kita-Kanto exhibition – literally the exhibition of the North Kanto district – covered initially three and eventually five neighbouring prefectures including Tochigi. Partly as a result of this and partly as a consequence of its policy of strict selection, the success rate at the Kita-Kanto exhibition became considerably lower; only 18% out of the 1,038 contributors managed to reach the Museum galleries in 1983, which dropped to 13% for the Tochigi artists. The most important difference, however, was the selection of the members of their hanging committees. While the Kenten's committee was occupied by local artists, the ten members of the Kita-Kanto's committee were all "art critics" from other parts of Japan, who all belonged to the AICA Japan which formed a new world of critical journalism independent of the art groups (see 6.5). Regarding this personnel decision, Director

Oshima defended it as essential to secure a fair judgement (Oshima 1983). He maintained that those art critics – mostly from "the centre" both geographically (Tokyo) and symbolically (the centre of the art world or critical journalism) – were capable of strict and fair judgement based on their expertise without favouritism. However, he continued:

> As for artists, it is not very easy to find a suitable person because of his/her relations with his/her masters and group exhibitions. Even if he/she clears this condition, it is still difficult to choose one with broad and profound knowledge of the present state of art. [Oshima 1983]

The Museum thus introduced a completely different system from the Kenten. In a sense, the Museum realised its long-standing ideal by carrying out what it proposed to do about the Kenten when the Kenten committee asked the Museum for their use of the gallery space (see 7.3); the new exhibition was established as a "serious" competition for young professional artists and excluded the local artists from the committee. The exhibition was open to all – even to the regular winners, the contributors, and even the bosses of its counterpart; but the Kenten artists started to neglect the Kita-Kanto exhibition, realising that their works stood little chance of being accepted. The Tochigi Museum succeeded in establishing a fortress around its world of curators and art critics against the Kenten and its power structure. Yoneda (1984) chairing the Tochigi League of Artists described the Museum as "a centre to authorise art critics". This expression may be true in the sense that the Museum and the exhibition it sponsored were constructed deliberately to claim curators' and critics' authority in the prefectural art scene which had long been dominated by the Kenten system.

What artistic value did the Museum promote through the Kita-Kanto exhibition? What value was made possible by the new exhibition with the system distinguished

from the existing one of the Kenten, and how exactly were they different? There was a particular sense of artistic value which was at issue in the conflict between the museum-based curators and the Kenten artists; it was called reproachfully by the latter as "the taste for the avant-garde" or "the taste for abstract".[21] As I discuss below, those tastes could occur *only* in relation to the historical view of art which was evaluated by the curators and neglected in the world of art groups including the Kenten.

I have already shown how the art museum developed in relation to the evolutionary, avant-gardist historical perspective in eighteenth-century Europe (see 3.5). In the last chapter, I also pointed out that this particular form of historical perspective did not develop in Japan in the field of Japanese modern art until the curators and art critics started to form their world in the space of art museums after World War II. This perspective is closely related to the taste for the avant-garde. Fisher (1991) defines the historicisation of contemporary art objects as "the strategy of the future's past" (91). In the highly historically conscious institution – i.e. the museum, the value of a contemporary work is determined by its position at a certain point in the future when it will fit into the chronological table showing the "progress" of art works. However, when the latest, brand-new works are involved, the museum and art critics cannot defer their judgement until the present eventually becomes a past. They are required to see the works according to their potential to form a part of the past in the future: "The essential task of this professional criticism is to historicize the present, to imagine it as the future's past, and by that act to give or deny value to

---

[21] See Yoneda 1984 and Yoneda's statement quoted in Sugawara 1984, 156. These "tastes" and "tendencies" were also criticised by the Superintendent of Educational Affairs at the Prefectural Assembly Committee Meeting on 7 March 1983 (Watanabe 1998, 80–86).

the individual work or artistic career. The critic is the advance scout of a museum culture since his task is, so to speak, to get to the work before history itself does" (ibid., 90). This historical strategy is also an avant-gardist one; it is an "attempt to control the sequence of descendants so that we will find, between our ancestors and our descendants, our 'place'", based on the assumption that "the being of objects" are "to be radically historical" (ibid., 6). Of course, the avant-garde refers to the artistic movements which are innovative and unprecedented in the sense that they are rebellious against the convention of the past; but none of them could exist without a strong sense of a succession of past achievements which the avant-garde artists and critics would be dissatisfied with and of the future when their achievements would be approved as a part of the past in art history. The historical consciousness in art is essential to a taste for the avant-garde.

It is, then, not at all surprising that the avant-garde was not understood by the Kenten artists. The Kenten system, identical to the one of the art groups, was not concerned with the art history project promoted by the curators; on the contrary, its *iemoto* system conflicted with the new system of art history. For the Kenten artists who severely criticised the Museum's judgement in the Kita-Kanto exhibition and in its acquisition of art works, the "avant-garde", "abstract", and "contemporary art" meant nothing more than a "taste" or "bias". They were not necessarily regarded as a "radical" movement to represent our time or a "prophesy" to the next generation; they were mere inclinations or colours of different art groups. The Museum was in favour of the "avant-garde group" – it was a group in the sense that it was considered as a sect within the art world, and the non-avant-gardist Kenten artists outside the current of art history who, for example, worked on representational paintings felt

unjustly neglected.

Thus the Kita-Kanto exhibition embodied the world of curators which first materialised in the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art as we have seen in the last chapter. It was structured quite deliberately to realise the new world of art as an alternative to that of the Kenten exhibition which replicated the world of art groups. The exhibition system sponsored by the Tochigi Museum undermined the system of the Kenten exhibition by denying the organisational structure of the Kenten and by introducing a set of values shared by a certain kind of art professionals. The Kita-Kanto exhibition symbolised a sphere of the curators where their interests and judgements – such as the concept of the avant-garde – were validated. Since the Museum Law (1951) guaranteed their professional position in the art world which had long been monopolised by the art groups and their exhibitions, the curators had struggled for their recognition and authority in the museum. Their attempts resulted in the growing number of new institutions as their base and new colleagues. In 1982, their network was organised as a privately sponsored association of 35 art museums – the Liaison Council of Art Museums (Bijutsukan Renraku Kyogikai [美術館連絡協議会]) which consisted mainly of the curatorial staff of prefectural institutions.[22] The Kita-Kanto exhibition which started in 1975 was no doubt one of the earliest and most significant achievements of the new professionals of the museum. It had developed to such an extent as to threaten the Kenten artists, who could no longer ignore the exhibition and other projects of the Museum and led to the series of events of the "Tochigi Problem". Nonetheless, the authority of the curators had neither been

---

[22] This organisation was sponsored by a Japanese soap manufacturer, Kao (花王), and a national broadsheet, Yomiuri. Oshima was actively involved in its establishment and management. See Oshima 1995, 125–42.

successfully established nor surpassed their counterpart. As a result of the controversies in the early 1980s, the Kita-Kanto exhibition was practically abolished after its fourth and last exhibition in 1984 while the Kenten survived. Moreover, Director Oshima was replaced by a local government official who had no specialist knowledge of art history and criticism.

The curators won a certain level of recognition as an agent of the art field and the Kenten's counterparts in cooperation with the increasing number of "independent" artists and a nation-wide network of modern art museums (see 7.3); but their position in the art field of Tochigi remained relatively minor and insecure. Oshima was always obliged to maintain the professionalism of the curator in relation to the "Tochigi Problem" during and after the series of controversies which made him "retire" from the Museum. He manifested the importance of the curator's commitment to the judgement of contemporary works (Oshima 1983) and deplored the current situation where "a curator who is given specialised tasks according to the Museum Law would be criticised when he/she tries to pursue those tasks earnestly" (Oshima 1984). His complaint about a serious lack of consideration on the professional task of the curators was directed toward two particular agents associated with the art field. One was clearly the Kenten artists who criticised the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts and particularly Oshima's leadership. According to them, as I have already mentioned above, the Museum was biased to a "taste" for the avant-garde and other particular tendencies and unjustly neglected their works; they would not trust the professional judgement of the curators on contemporary works and regarded it as deliberately malicious and dishonest. The other, as especially identified in his national newspaper article (Oshima 1984), was the local authorities that considered

the involvement of museum curators in the judgement process of contemporary art as a deviation from the regular duties of a public art museum. Such local authorities believed that cultural administration should not go beyond paying money and arranging environmental conditions (including the establishment of a museum); they did not like the Museum – as part of the administrative system – to get involved in "such controversial issues".

The curator as a museum-based profession introduced to Japan in the 1950s thus further developed its transcultural characteristics in relation to the localised and contingent circumstances of Tochigi in the 1970s and 80s. Like the world of the Kenten artists, the Curator's world associated with the Kita-Kanto exhibition and the Tochigi Museum consisted of the shared characteristics and specialist concerns of curatorial staff and the peculiarities developed in the temporally and geographically specific and localised condition. These hybrid agents of the prefectural art field interacted intensely over the use of the galleries of the prefectural museum in the early 1980s.

7.5. Consequences of the Conflict

The conflict between the Kenten or League artists and the museum-based curators did not bring about any kind of final solution or reconciliation but resulted rather in a continuing process of friction and negotiation between these interest groups. At a glance, all the main objectives of the League artists involved in the "Tochigi Problem" seem to have been attained whereas those of the museum-based curators and the Roundtable seem to have failed completely. The former succeeded in rescheduling the Kenten exhibition from winter to autumn, virtually abolishing the

Kita-Kanto exhibition, and making Director Oshima retire from his post. The latter could not retain either the Kita-Kanto exhibition or Director Oshima despite their campaign. The Kenten as a part of the Prefectural Art Festival continues to be held in the Museum every autumn. The only exception was the year 1991 when the General Cultural Centre of Tochigi Prefecture (Tochigiken Sogo Bunka Centre [栃木県総合文化センター]) opened. All the events of the Art Festival, including the Kenten exhibition, were held at the brand new cultural complex in the centre of Utsunomiya City that year, but a part of the Kenten (Western-style painting, sculpture, and arts and crafts) returned to the Museum in the next year because of practical inconveniences experienced by the exhibitors at the galleries of the Cultural Centre (Aoki 2001). Thus the sensitive coexistence of curatorial authority and *iemoto* authority in the museum space has not changed since their serious conflict in the early 1980s. Nevertheless, there is no absolute winner in this problematic relationship between the two agents of the prefectural art field; they have constantly conflicted and negotiated with each other in their ever-shifting, unequal power relations.

However, the subsequent development of the Kenten exhibition most evidently reveals this complexity of the relations between the Museum/Roundtable and the Kenten/League. I make three points here. Firstly, the League no longer dominates the Kenten exhibition after some major artists belonging to the League left the Kenten to organise their own annual exhibition in 1985. This new exhibition sponsored by the League, confusingly called "Kenten", explicitly rivalled its counterpart – the Kenten as a part of the Prefectural Art Festival. The annual event of the League at the Tobu Department Store in Utsunomiya City coincides with the Kenten held at the

Museum and the Cultural Centre in the same city, consists of the same six categories of art, and holds a travelling exhibition to Mibu (壬生) as its counterpart do (Watanabe 1998, 334–35). Although there were some signs of their merger, their rivalry still continues. This represents an unexpected compromise on the side of the League artists and one of a few successful cases on the side of the Kenten reformers. The League artists had long been predominant in the steering committee of the Kenten exhibition, and the system which allowed this absolutism of the League was continuously criticised by the anti-League artists – including those who belonged to the Association and the Roundtable. The situation improved for the Kenten reformers when nine anti-League artists rejected the membership of the hanging committee and the privilege of "invitation" which guaranteed them the unconditional acceptance of their works for the Kenten exhibition. Accordingly, the reorganisation of the Kenten system was seriously considered by the local authority, and a meeting of the special committee consisting of the representatives from the League artists, other Kenten artists, the Museum, and the local government was convened to discuss this matter. As a result, the *iemoto* masters of the League who had long been predominant in the exhibition were excluded from the steering committee of the Kenten. The League masters, unsatisfied with this outcome, were compelled to leave the Kenten with their colleagues and disciples.

Secondly, despite the separation of the *iemoto* masters of the League who dominated the Kenten for years, the *iemoto* system of the Kenten itself did not drastically change after this reorganisation in 1985. Although the reorganisation succeeded in replacing some *iemoto* masters, the system which authorised the *iemoto* power and its politics remained intact. For example, the invited works which were

exempt from the normal process of judgement survived the 1985 reform despite the persistent suggestion to abolish them made by the Museum. The power structure of the Kenten associated with the *iemoto* system again became an issue in the late 1990s when the Art Festival celebrated its fifty-year anniversary. As I discussed in Section 2, the "reformer" of the Kenten himself admitted that his 1985 reform only succeeded in the replacement of "Emperors" and suggested that another reorganisation should be necessary (Tochigi-ken Bunka Kyokai 1997). Moreover, the close relationship between the prefectural art world and the Tokyo art groups continues. In 2000, there were no less than 30 regional branches of the Tokyo groups in Tochigi. These groups are still connected to the two Kenten exhibitions, too. The *iemoto* system of these groups does not seem to have changed, either. A newspaper column in 2000 refers to this persistent disposition through interviews with local artists. One Western-style painter who belonged to the Tochigi branch of a nation-wide art group states: "As far as the ordinary members of the group are concerned, a master of the group headquarter live in a different world. As we were instructed by him, I realised that the style of my painting became similar to that of the master and those who were close to him" (*Shimotsuke Shinbun* 22 October 2000).

The third point is that the Prefectural Art Museum did not entirely submit to the *iemoto* system associated with the continuing Kenten while it lost its leader, Director Oshima, and the Kita-Kanto exhibition which was significantly associated with the values of the curatorial authority based in the Museum. The Museum retained its character as a "museum of modern art" staffed with curators and continued to resist the pressures from the Kenten artists. Although the Museum still houses the Kenten, it has never allowed the Kenten artists to monopolise it, insisting to a full involvement

in the planning and management of the exhibition. The Museum also manages to keep this annual event out of the extension built especially for permanent exhibition in 1981. The shortage of space has always been a great problem for the Kenten artists, and they demanded the Museum to surrender the permanent galleries as well as the temporary galleries for their use. However, the Museum consistently refuses such demands.

Furthermore, the Museum now intends to develop a particular exhibition to facilitate the relations between the Museum/the curators and the Kenten/the local artists.[23] It is a large-scale, special exhibition that was launched in December 2000, inviting 253 local artists from six genres including painting (both Japanese-style and Western-style), sculpture, arts and crafts, calligraphy, photography, and audio-visual installations.[24] Prior to this event to commemorate the advent of the new century, similar attempts to survey the contemporary art in the prefecture had been made three times (1973, 1977, and 1983–84); but they had long been suspended after the "Tochigi Problem". These exhibitions were different from both the Kenten and the Kita-Kanto in that their contributors were all "invited" and therefore no competition was involved. I make two points about the exhibition of this form held between December 2000 and March 2001 at the Museum. One is the diversity of the invited artists. Evidently associated with curators' concern for taking a historical survey of the contemporary art in Tochigi, the exhibition sponsored by the Museum deliberately included local artists whose authority depended on the Kenten/art group system as

---

[23] The subsequent discussion on the new form of exhibition sponsored by the Tochigi Museum owes a lot to the interview with the present head curator of the Museum, Aoki 2001.

[24] The exhibition was titled "Door of Thousand Years" ("Sen-nen no tobira" 「千年の扉」), which commemorated the millennium and the turn of the century.

well as the young talents who had little to do with the *iemoto* politics of the prefectural art world. The Kita-Kanto exhibition progressively opposed the art group system and excluded the *iemoto* masters and their disciples by introducing an alternative value system associated with art history. However, this general survey exhibition represents a more flexible attitude of the Museum toward the *iemoto* artists of the Kenten. It is an attempt to accept the *iemoto* art into the curator's world which developed its distinctive characters in relation to curatorial practices in the Western institutions. This composite exhibition of contemporary art in Tochigi indicates a changing attitude on the part of the *iemoto* artists, too. As I mentioned above, the value system associated with the curatorial authority and the Kita-Kanto exhibition was not only contradictory to the value system developed by the Kenten artists associated with the *iemoto* system but also a threat to the *iemoto* authority. As a self-defensive reaction to the curatorial authority, the sectionalism of the *iemoto* artists intensified through the series of events related to the "Tochigi Problem". Then, their participation in this general survey exhibition where these two conflicting value systems encounter is a great risk to them.

The second point is a distinction – which was made for the first time in the 2000 exhibition – between the artists living in the prefecture and outside the prefecture. The "local artists" eligible for invitation to the exhibition consisted of the current residents of the prefecture and those who came from the prefecture but lived somewhere else. The exhibition in 2000 focused on the artists who resided in the prefecture. The prospect for the future is to hold another exhibition of the same kind in 2003, concentrating on those who live *outside* Tochigi, then to focus on the residential artists again in 2006. The Museum plans to continue these two

exhibitions of the Tochigi artists regularly every six years. The distinction between two kinds of local artists indicates a part of the significant negotiations between the curatorial and the *iemoto* authorities. It is for the first time that two separate exhibitions are planned for the two different forms of local artists. In the first exhibition of this kind, only those who lived in the prefecture were eligible. In the following two exhibitions in the 1970s and the 80s, this distinction was not made explicitly. Regardless of their residency, all the artists related to Tochigi participated in one event, where their works were displayed next to one another. The significance of the distinction between those who reside in the prefecture and those outside is associated with the different dispositions of these artists depending on their residence. Those who live in the prefecture are likely to be closely related to the *iemoto* system of the Kenten and the local art groups, whereas the artists living outside the prefecture tend to be detached from the regional art world of Tochigi and more concerned about the *iemoto* politics of Tokyo groups or the art-historical currents associated with the Western art world. Consequently, the tendencies of the works and the standards applied to the creation and the evaluation of the works greatly differ between these two kinds of local artists whose creative activities depend on different sets of local politics and value systems. The curatorial authorities who once supported the Kita-Kanto exhibition as the antithesis of the Kenten exhibition were essentially biased toward the national/international value system associated with the local artists living outside the prefecture and neglected the regional art world of the *iemoto* sectionalism associated with the artists living in the prefecture. However, this new form of exhibition indicates that the curators recognised the significance of the artists based in the Kenten exhibition as a component of the prefectural art world. The

separate exhibition for the artists in the region closely related to the regional *iemoto* system reduces the threat of art-historical perspectives to the *iemoto* authority to some extent. At the same time, though, as an event sponsored by the Museum, it is inevitable that the value system of the curatorial authority would be reflected in the selection of the locally-based contributors.

7.6. Conclusion

The transformation or hybridisation of the empty museums, associated with the interactions not exclusively but especially between the two distinct agents of the art field – i.e. the art groups and the curators – which were formed differently in relation to local socio-cultural conditions, progressed in different institutions in different degrees, timings, and intensities. As the Tochigi's case shows, the struggles between the localised agents of the prefectural art field resulted not in the triumph of one and the defeat of the other but in their continuous, interactive relations within the temporally- and spatially-specific contexts. This process of negotiation, confrontation and contestation during the museum boom consequently produced more diverse types of public art museums. The Tochigi Museum, which opened as an empty museum with curators, is still focused on the *kikakuten* exhibitions curated by the museum staff. However, it now holds a collection of 8,000 works and makes their regular displays at the annexe entirely devoted to "permanent exhibitions", which was added to the main building in 1981. At the same time, its involvement with the Kenten exhibition still continues; the Museum co-sponsors and accommodates the event every autumn.

The Kanagawa Museum, on which the Tochigi Museum was modelled, has

evolved into a similar but slightly different institution. As the Tochigi, the Kanagawa still holds several *kikakuten* exhibitions annually, but it is now also equipped with the annexe for permanent exhibitions (1984). Its collection counts more than 5,000 today. However, the Kanagawa's relations to the Kenten exhibition are different from those of the Tochigi. As a prefectural institution, the Kanagawa Museum co-sponsored and accommodated this annual event which started in the prefecture in 1966. The prefectural exhibition was transferred in 1975 to the Kenmin Garari (県民ギャラリー [Gallery for Prefectural Citizens]) which was established in Yokohama City (the prefectural capital) as a part of the prefectural cultural complex.

The difference between the Tochigi and the Kanagawa may be minimal compared to the separate ways in which the other type of empty museum, associated with art groups, developed. In 1975, the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, the Mecca of Japanese art groups, was transformed into a hybrid institution organising its own *kikakuten* and permanent exhibitions as well as serving as a rental space for art group exhibitions. This shift in the curatorial policy coincided with the opening of the new museum building. The new building consisted of the galleries for the Museum's own exhibitions separate from the rental space. Curator Asahi Akira was scouted from the Kanagawa Museum to lead the new curatorial section, and a team of curators was formed in the Metropolitan Museum for the first time in its history. By the mid-1990s, the Museum had amassed its collection to 3,000 works of Japanese and non-Japanese, mainly modern, art. However, the Metropolitan Museum returned to its old style when most of its collection, apart from several sculptural works fixed on the site, and most curatorial staff were transferred to a new, collection-based institution – the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Contemporary Art in 1995. Today

its main focus is again on the art group exhibitions which count more than 200 a year. Only one curator is left to organise *kikakuten* exhibitions; but these are now dependent on the exterior resources – both financially and technically – i.e. newspaper publishing companies and the art specialists from other institutions (Mamuro 2000).

The Aichi Museum continued to accommodate art group exhibitions, but at the same time it had started constant purchases of art works, their regular displays, and *kikakuten* exhibitions of the Museum's own make by the end of the 1960s (see 6.6). In 1979, the galleries devoted to permanent exhibitions opened. However, more dramatic change in its curatorial policy was seen when the local authority decided to move the Museum into a new cultural complex on the site just next to the existing building. More systematic collection for the new museum was launched by the Preparatory Committee with specially allocated public funds in 1988 – four years before the completion of the new building, and furthermore two exhibitions of the new acquisitions were held at the old museum in 1989 and 1991 (Aichi-ken Bijutsukan 1998). The new institution in the new building which opened in 1992 consequently put more emphasis on collection and permanent exhibitions; but the most important characteristic of this museum was that the Museum's own exhibitions (both *kikakuten* and permanent) and the art group exhibitions were clearly and systematically separated. The Museum is now located on the seventh and ninth floors of the prefectural cultural complex; the main floor (ninth floor) consists of three galleries for *kikakuten* exhibitions and five galleries for permanent exhibitions while all ten galleries of the other floor are devoted to art group exhibitions. Although both floors belong to one institution, they are run by separate divisions.

Now the "empty museums" – i.e. the museums entirely relying on either art

group exhibitions or/and *kikakuten* exhibitions without collections and permanent exhibitions – are rare; the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, while many post-war institutions were allegedly modelled on it, is an extraordinary case which retains its original emptiness almost intact. However, there are still some attempts to found new "empty museums" today. Most notably the Office of Cultural Affairs (Bunkacho [文化庁]) announced a finalised plan for the "National Gallery" (it is called so in Japanese as well) which would be built in Tokyo in 2005 (Monbu-kagakusho 2002). This new national institution is uniquely devoted to the art group exhibitions and the blockbuster, *kikakuten* exhibitions sponsored by mass media companies, etc. There will be a few curatorial staff, no art collection, and no permanent exhibition. The art groups took the leadership of this new museum plan; the preparation/management committees have been chaired by a Japanese-style painter, Hirayama Ikuo (平山郁夫, 1930–), a great *iemoto* master of the Japan Academy of Art (the Inten). The five-storey building (including the basement) of the National Gallery is designed especially for the convenience of the "competitive" exhibitions of the art groups. The whole basement is dedicated to the spaces essential for the works before and after the exhibitions; a large reception space, storage rooms, rooms for the hanging committee meetings, and spaces to facilitate their judgement process. There are five galleries, each of which is equipped with a waiting room for the members of the art groups. This museum is the first national institution for the art groups and their ultimate base – in terms of not only prestige but also practicality. However, it is more interesting to consider the way the National Gallery will be transformed after its opening. As a national institution parallel to its collection-based counterpart – the Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art – the Gallery will certainly develop its own

characteristics distinguished from the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum or any other museums originally categorised into this type.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

My main purpose in writing this thesis has been to free analysis of the characteristics of Japanese public art museums from the legacy of the "empty museum discourse" which is prevalent in current Japanese museology. For this purpose, as stated in Chapter 2, I conceptualised the development of public art museums in Japan as a process of "transculturation" and not as a direct result – or reflection – of Japan's "westernisation" or "modernisation". The art museum, as a concept and institution first developed in the modern West, did not settle in the foreign environment of the Orient as a dominant cultural phenomenon. While certainly acting upon Japanese culture, it was radically and contingently modified – or "japanised" – in the course of its adaptation. The characteristic "emptiness" of the public art museums in Japan exemplifies this process. In this concluding chapter of the thesis, I first summarise my overall arguments so far and then discuss the implications of my research findings for Bourdieu's model of the development of the Western – or, more precisely, French – art field. For the transcultural process through which the Japanese art field developed as a whole presents a counter case to the particular processes identified in Bourdieu's study. I draw on Nick Prior's recent study of the development of the Scottish cultural field (Prior 2002) in order to make this point. Informed by Bourdieu's concept of the field, Prior shows that the Scottish art field characteristically developed in relation to the specific, localised contingencies of the socio-cultural circumstances of Scotland.

Before the detailed analysis of Japanese cases in Chapters 4–7, Western museum development was examined in relation to its unique socio-cultural conditions obtaining during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Chapter 3). I focused on four aspects of Western museums that are central to the new museological critique. First, the origin of public art exhibitions – the French Salon – was interpreted as a part of the "bourgeois public sphere" in Habermas's sense. Second, Bourdieu's concept of "cultural capital" and its peculiar relations with the cultured classes was used to explain the exclusivity of the art museum/exhibition. Third, Foucauldian understandings of the relations between culture and "liberal government" informed the way cultural goods and institutions were made available to the working classes in the nineteenth century. Fourth, the development of art museums as a part of the "historicised" domain was conceptualised by means of Foucault's model of *epistemes*. The art museum, in this way having been shown to belong to the unique historical and cultural configuration of modern European society, was "imported" into and "adopted" by the entirely unfamiliar environment of Japan in the late nineteenth century.

My first concern was with the Bunten art exhibition – the Japanese interpretation of the French Salon – which was launched in 1907 (Chapter 4). This official event sponsored by the Ministry of Education was initially expected to designate "new classics" of contemporary art on the basis of a "historicised" canon modelled on the "Academy" exhibitions in Paris and London. However, this potential function was radically altered during its confrontation with the socio-cultural conditions of contemporary Japan. I identified two important factors that prevented the Bunten from developing as a part of the "historical" sphere; one

was the conceptual discontinuity between the pre-modern art and the "new art", and the second was the development of "art groups" associated with the *iemoto* system. The former indicates the separation of the new forms of art represented by the Bunten (Japanese-style painting, Western-style painting, and sculpture) – which were hybrids of Western artistic concepts and Japanese traditions – from the "antiques" which were actively historicised at the Imperial Museums and the Tokyo Art College. Regarding the latter, the Bunten was progressively organised so as to maintain and enhance their peculiar power structure of the art groups associated with the *iemoto* system which had long been prevalent in a wide range of cultural practices in pre-modern Japan. This system was not conducive to the interference of the avant-gardist historical perspectives, which could have threatened the *iemoto* hierarchy.

The fifth chapter focused on the emptiness of the first public art museum in Japan – the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (1926). On the introduction of the "art museum" into the Japanese society in the mid-1920s, a "no-collection policy" was positively chosen and taken up despite the long-standing campaign for the establishment of a collection-based institution. This decision was made by the art groups that led this new museum project and, after its opening, the management of the Museum. By the mid-1920s, the art groups had developed their "art field" through the increasing number of "unofficial" groups separating from the Bunten (or the Teiten as it had been renamed by then). However, those unofficial – and often anti-official – groups of artists did not evolve into a part of the bourgeois public sphere as the unofficial criticisms of the French Salon did. Instead, the unofficial groups formed a part of the art field associated with the *iemoto* system of the official

exhibition. To them, the priority was to secure the gallery space for their regular exhibitions; and, moreover, the possibility of collection, permanent display, and art history in the museum was averted because it could undermine the art group system. As a consequence, the historicisation of modern art did not progress until the post-war period.

The correlation between the empty museums and the art groups continued after World War II. The Aichi Prefectural Art Museum (1955) was the first post-war establishment to follow the curatorial practices of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (Chapter 6). However, localised contingencies characterised the regional art field associated with the art group system and orientated the varied degrees in which the local artists were involved in the establishment and management of the regional public museums. My main concern in Chapter 6 was with a new type of emptiness – distinguished from that of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum – developed by the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (1951). Like the Metropolitan Museum, the Kanagawa opened without any substantial collection or permanent display; but the latter did not accommodate art group exhibitions that had always been the main focus of the former. This distinctive characteristic was developed in relation to museum-based curators, not to the art group system. The curators refused to accept the canon established by the art group system; instead, they launched a comprehensive programme to historicise modern Japanese art. In this process, the curatorial practice of the Kanagawa Museum that focused on temporary *kikakuten* exhibitions of loan objects was positively chosen and promoted. Thus the Kanagawa Museum acquired its peculiarities that were distinguished from both the Metropolitan Museum and the

Western museums specialising in modern art.

In the same chapter, I also showed that the Japanese curator, *gakugei-in*, was developed in the process of transculturation. The curator's professional concerns were closely related to the Western curatorial practices based on collection, permanent display, and art historical expertise. However, despite its Western connections, this profession evolved into a unique form in the socio-cultural circumstances of post-war Japan – occupying a particular position in relation to other agents (most notably art groups and academic criticism) in the Japanese art field in the 1950s. The specific nature of the Japanese curator is due to its highly localised setting, and this developed the new kind of empty museum.

During the museum boom (from the late 1960s to the early 90s), the empty museums – both old and new establishments – were transformed and diversified as the ongoing interactions between the art groups and the curators intensified over the use of the museum space and the right to evaluate art works (Chapter 7). The two polar types of empty museum – the Tokyo Metropolitan/Aichi type associated with the art groups and the Kanagawa/Tokyo National type associated with the curators – no longer represented the full range of public art museums developed in this period. Each museum was formed and transformed in their relations to the art groups and the curators and in the conflicts and negotiations between these agents in the particular circumstances specific to the art field of the local area. The case of the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts indicates this interactive and transcultural process. The development of both the art group system and the curator's world in the provincial City of Utsunomiya in Tochigi Prefecture was germane to the development of those agents in Tokyo and Kanagawa. However, the

Tochigi's case also reflected the localised conditions of the 1970s and 80s and of the cultural fields of the particular prefecture. Furthermore, the consequences brought about by the "Tochigi Problem" suggest the significance of the ongoing relations between the interest groups pertaining to the Prefectural Museum and the prefectural art field. The struggles between the agents representing different and often contradictory cultural attitudes and tendencies would never result in the triumph of one or the total surrender of the other; but they would be perpetual interactions – perpetual conflicts and negotiations – in the unbalanced, shifting power relations in the art fields.

My empirical attention to the development of public art museums in Japan, then, provides evidence that they do not represent a unilateral or one-way process of westernisation of Japan at any moment of history. The art museum, as a concept and an institution, which first developed in the modern West has been modified and translated through the contingency of the socio-cultural conditions of contemporary Japan. To be more precise, many "Western" cultural elements that were introduced to Japan were never genuinely "Western" in the first place. The superficial similarities between the Western "originals" and their Japanese equivalents often deceive our perception, and we tend to compare them as if they were pure opposites. However, the development of the three "modern" categories of the "Western-born" concept of art (*bijutsu*) in the Meiji period – Japanese-style painting, Western-style painting, and sculpture, the launch of the Bunten which modelled on the "French" Salon (Chapter 4), the establishment of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum as the first case of an institution which had developed in the "West" being materialised in Japan (Chapter 5); and the introduction of

curatorial authority (*gakugei-in*) associated with the curatorial practices prevalent in the West (Chapters 6 and 7) – all indicate that various elements of Western culture were only partially and selectively appropriated by sections and interest groups of Japanese society without any intention of adopting Western culture without modification, in its "pure" state, as it were.

Moreover, the later development of the "Western institutions" in Japan cannot be interpreted as a case of transculturation in this sense. As time went by after the ostentatious policy of westernisation and modernisation was introduced by the Meiji government, the relations between the Japanese museums and their Western counterparts could no longer be explained in terms of a Western prototype and its application to Japanese cultural environment. According to my extended interpretation of the concept of transculturation, this process shows a form of transculturation in which the elements which had already been through a transcultural procedure were re-interpreted and re-modified time after time in the contingent and localised conditions to which these elements were introduced. This tendency was most evident in the post-war period – the time when most museums were established in Japan (see Chapters 6 and 7). First, many new institutions no longer referred directly to Western traditions; they followed the home-grown models such as the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum and the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art. In the process of their establishment and development in different provincial cities all over the country, these models were modified in varied ways and degrees depending on the socio-cultural specifics of the regions. Second, the principal agents of the Japanese art fields – the art groups and the curators – which had been both developed in the process of transculturation were also

translated according to the localised configurations of the prefectural art fields. These agents in a region certainly shared some common characteristics with those in other areas. The art groups in Tokyo, for example, had their regional branches in Aichi, Kanagawa, and Tochigi; and the curators of both the public and private art museums all over Japan formed a nationwide network to pursue their common interests. Nevertheless, sustaining their links with each other, both the art groups and the curators evolved into diverse and distinct hybrids in the different cultural environments specific to the localities and the various relations that the agents formed. These localised forms of agents generated an increasingly wide range of art museums during the museum boom.

Prior's (2002) account of the processes through which the National Gallery of Scotland developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries raises similar concerns. He examines how the "continental model", particularly the case of the Louvre, was twice "removed" (the first removal resulted in the English model) upon its introduction to the localised, distinctive socio-cultural textures of Scotland. He argues that the Scottish model should be regarded as distinguished from and also partly corresponding to "the main trajectories of museum development elsewhere" (ibid., 5). His concern is not restricted to the development of art galleries; it extends to the process associated with the development of the Scottish art field which he analyses with an explicit reference to Bourdieu's continental model. As I discussed earlier (see 4.1; 4.3), the autonomisation/purification of art (and the art field) constitutes one of the crucial elements in Bourdieu's formulation. The sanctity of the experience of a work of art which seems widely and eagerly accepted in modern Western society was in fact the starting point of his studies of the

development of the art field.

> I would simply ask why so many critics, so many writers, so many philosophers take such satisfaction in professing that the experience of a work of art is ineffable, that it escapes by definition all rational understanding; why they are so eager to concede without a struggle the defeat of knowledge; and where does their irrepressible need to belittle rational understanding come from, this rage to affirm the irreducibility of the work of art, or, to use a more suitable word, its transcendence. [Bourdieu 1996, xiv]

Therefore, Bourdieu's main concern with the concept of the art field is to reveal the process through which the work of art and its experience has assumed its autonomy and purity. Bourdieu's model of the autonomisation/purification of art involves a wide range of processes including the professionalisation of artists and critics, the liberation of artistic life from the patronage of court and church, and the interactions between the art field and other fields (Bourdieu 1993, 112–13). Prior considers the English and the Scottish models in relation to these complex processes associated with the development of the art field in the Continental model of Bourdieu. In doing so, he shows the idiosyncrasies of the cases of Great Britain.[1]

In this thesis, I have not dealt with the full range of agents and processes pertaining to the development of the art fields in modern Japan. Nevertheless, I argue that the development of the Japanese art field as a whole also presents a model which should be distinguished from the specific model offered by Bourdieu. I note two points concerning this proposition from my preceding analyses. First, the Japanese art world consists of unique agents that have no direct equivalent in the West – such as the art groups, which occupy unique positions and develops distinctive relations with each other; the position of the curators in relation to the art groups and the academic critics, and which conform to distinct rules of their

---

[1] This point is most explicitly made in, for example, Prior 2002, 99–100 and 134.

fields; and the *iemoto* system associated with the field of the art groups. Second, the development of the Japanese art fields shows that the autonomisation/purification of art has not been achieved in the Japanese field in the same way, or to the same degree, as it was in the European case. Although it would require a much broader contextual study to properly assess Bourdieu's model in relation to the Japanese case, I believe that my research has shown a glimpse of the way in which the Japanese art field was characteristically developed. The best example may be the development of "amateurism". The art group, one of the major agents in the art field in modern Japan, was associated with the *iemoto* system which, in turn, played a key role in transmitting cultural skills to amateur practitioners. This "amateurism" of the art groups intensified after World War II in the process of the survival and expansion of the art groups (Chapter 6). The conflict between the Kenten artists and the curators of the Tochigi Museum (Chapter 7) could be interpreted as a conflict between amateurism and professionalism. The Kenten exhibition was a "festival" associated with local amateur artists who formed the power structure and the master-disciple relations homologous to those of the art group; but the Kita-Kanto exhibition was considered as a gateway to professional recognition for young artists. Their controversy over the use of the Museum brought about complex and entangled consequences, which by no means "autonomised" or "purified" the art field of Tochigi Prefecture. The amateur tradition remains strong while the current of professionalism has progressed to some extent as well.

Furthermore, the Japanese model as shown in this thesis problematises the differentiation made by Bourdieu upon which his concept of the purity of art

depends – that between the field of political and economic power and the cultural field which consists of the art field. In his view, the autonomy of the cultural field is secured by its relative independence from the hierarchies associated with the field of power, such as those in commercial success and bourgeois tastes (Bourdieu 1993, 46; 1996, 47–112). The trajectory of public art museums in modern Japan illuminates the existence of distinct socio-cultural dynamics that are in contradistinction to this structure. The relations between political/economical power and intellectual/artistic power are not polarised as much as they are presented in Bourdieu's model. The Emperor system which links the political and the cultural fields or the ongoing intimacy between the art groups and the department stores may reveal a part of the more complex structure of the Japanese fields. Bourdieu (1993, 113) writes: "Artistic development towards autonomy progressed at different rates, according to the society and field of artistic life in question". However, the localised differences in the development of the art fields are more significant than he suggested in this compromising statement.[2] The Japanese case studies imply the socio-cultural conditions in which the direction toward autonomy itself may be problematised. The development of the cultural fields in Japan may be regarded as a countercase to Bourdieu's model – involving various agents characteristically developed in relation to the milieu of modern Japan, their conflicts and negotiations in the art field, their links with different social classes, and the interactions between the art field and other fields.

---

[2] See Fyfe (1996), who problematises Bourdieu's polarisation of the field of political/economic power and the cultural field through an empirical study of the Tate Gallery.

Bibliography

Abe, Nobuo. 1984. "Saitan: Tochigi-kenritsu Bijutsukan". *Shin Bijutsu Shinbun* 1 April.

Aichi-ken Bijutsukan, ed. 1993. *20-seiki Aichi no bijutsu.* Nagoya: Aichi-ken Bijutsukan.

---, ed. 1998. *Kindai-bijutsu no hyaku-nen: Aichi-ken Bijutsukan no korekushon.* Exhibition catalogue. Nagoya: Aichi-ken Bijutsukan.

Aichi-ken Bunka Kaikan, ed. 1979. *Aichi-ken Bunka Kaikan 20-nen no ayumi.* Nagoya: Aichi-ken Bunka Kaikan.

Akasegawa, Genpei. 1985. *Imaya akushon arunomi!: "Yomiuri Indépendant" to iu gensho.* Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo.

---. 1994. *Han-geijutsu anpan.* Tokyo: Chikuma Bunko.

Akutsu, Juyuki, et al. 1985. "Geijutsu-sai bijutsu-bumon no bapponteki-kaikaku wo uttaeru: Konnendo geijutsu-sai bijutsu-bumon (yoga) no shinsa, shotai-shuppin jitai no nini". Unpublished letter to the Tochigi-ken Bunka Kyokai. 2 September 1985.

Atelier 283. 1950. "Intabyu ni yoru hihan to kaisetsu: Tenrankai no arikata ni tsuite". 68–69.

Barrell, John. 1986. *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt: "The Body of the Public".* New Haven and London: Yale University.

Barry, Andrew, et al., eds. 1996a. *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Rationalities of Government.* London: UCL Press.

---. 1996b. "Introduction". Barry, et al. 1996a, 1–17.

Beasley, W. G. 1995. *The Rise of Modern Japan.* Second Edition. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Bennett, Tony. 1995. *The Birth of the Museum.* London and New York: Routledge.

---. 1997. "Regulated Restlessness: Museums, Liberal Government and the Historical Sciences". *Economy and Society* 26.2: 161–90.

---. 1998. *Culture: A Reformer's Science.* London, Thousand Oaks, and New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

---. 2000. "Acting on the Social: Art, Culture, and Government". *American Behavioral Scientist* 43.9: 1412–28.

Bijutsu Journal 8 December 1982. Sokan-go.

Bijutsu Journal 25 December 1982.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1968. "Outline of a Sociological Theory of Art Perception". *International Social Science Journal* 20.4: 589–612.

---. 1979. *Distinction: A Social Critique of Judgement of Taste.* Trans. Richard Nice. London, Melbourne and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

---. 1993. *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature.* Ed. Randal Johnson. Cambridge: Polity Press.

---. 1996. *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field.* Trans. Suzan Emanuel. Cambridge and Oxford: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre, and Alan Darbel. 1991. *The Love of Art: European Art Museums and Their Public.* Trans. Caroline Beattie and Nick Merriman. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Burchell, Graham. 1996. "Liberal Government and Techniques of the Self". Barry, et al. 1996a: 19–36.

Burchell, Graham, et al., eds. 1991. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality with Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michel Foucault.* London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Burks, Ardath W., ed. 1985. *The Modernizers: Overseas Students, Foreign Employees, and Meiji Japan.* Boulder and London: Westview Press.

Chuo Bijutsu 11.6. 1925. "Tokyo-fu Bijutsukan". 2–5.

Chuo Bijutsu 12.5. 1926. "Tokyo-fu Bijutsukan no shunsei". 12–24.

Clifford, James. 1997. *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Crow, Thomas E. 1985. *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Dean, Mitchell. 1999. *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society.* London: SAGE Publications.

DiMaggio, Paul, and Francie Ostrower. 1992. *Race, Ethnicity and Participation in the Arts: Patterns of Participation by Hispanics, Whites and African-Americans in Selected Activities from the 1982 and 1985 Surveys of Public Participation in the Arts.* Washington, D. C.: Seven Locks.

Duncan, Carol. 1995. *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums.* London and New York: Routledge.

Duncan, Carol, and Alan Wallach. 1980. "The Universal Survey Museum". *Art History* 3.4: 448–69.

Fisher, Phillip. 1991. *Making and Effacing Art: Modern American Art in a Culture of Museums.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Foucault, Michel. 1970. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences.* London: Tavistock Publications.

---. 1972. *The Archaeology of Knowledge.* London: Tavistock Publications.

---. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977.* Ed. Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon Books.

---. 1991. "Governmentality". Burchell, et al. 1991, 87–104.

Fujita, Shinichiro. 1985. "Sekai no atarashii gendai-bijutsukan". *Hakubutsukan Kenkyu* 210: 1–5.

Funato, Ko. 1955. "Aichi-ken Bijutsukan: Kindai-setsubi wo morashita bijutsukan". *Geijutsu Shincho* 6.5: 260–65.

---. 1957. "Depato bijutsu-bu hanjo-ki". *Geijutsu Shincho* 8.8: 183–86.

---. 1958. "Yomimono Kokuritsu Kindai Bijutsukan". *Geijutsu Shincho* 9.1: 98–107.

Furuta, Ryo. 1996. "Nihon no bijutsu-hakurankai: Sono kigen to hattatsu". *Museum* 545: 29–56.

Fyfe, Gordon. 1996. "A Trojan Horse at the Tate: Theorizing the Museum as Agency and Structure". *Theorizing Museums: Representing Identity and Diversity in a Changing World.* Ed. Sharon Macdonald and Gordon Fyfe. Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers. 203–28.

Geijutsu Shincho 8.5. 1957. "Nihon no Bijutsu-kan: 12 no Mondai". 179–194.

Geijutsu Shincho 8.9. 1957. "Bunkazai Hogo Iinkai, Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan". Tokushu: Nihon no geijutsu to monbu-kanryo. 262–273.

Geijutsu Shincho 8.10. 1957. "'Bijutsu Dantai'". Tokushu: Gaka to bijutsu dantai. 158–82.

Geijutsu Shincho 8.11. 1957. "'Geijutsu' hanjo tenmatsu-ki: to-bijutsukan". Ueno-no-mori no fushigina monogatari. 276–83.

Geijutsu Shincho 9.10. 1958. "Johoya makaritoru". Tokushu: Bijutsukai no dani. 256–61.

Guth, Christine M.E. 1993. *Art, Tea, and Industry: Matsuda Takashi and the Mitsui Circle.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Habermas, Jürgen. 1974. "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964)". Trans. Sara Lennox and Frank Lennox. *New German Critique* 1.3: 50–55.

---. 1989. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society.* Trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hage, Ghassan. 1998. *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society.* Series: Radical Writing. Annandale, N.S.W.: Pluto Press.

Hakubutsukan Kenkyu 294. 1992. "Dai-40-kai zenkoku hakubutsukan taikai hokoku: Shinpojiumu 'Atarashii seiki wo mezasu hakubutsukan' – kitaisareru hakubutsukan-zo". 4–10.

Hakubutsukan Kenkyu 302. 1993. "Heisi-4-nendo, hakubutsukan shidosha kenkyu-kyogi-kai: Shinpojiumu 'Atarashii seiki wo mezasu hakubutsukan' – kitaisareru hakubutsukan-zo". 22–25.

Harris, Ann Sutherland, and Linda Nochlin. 1976. *Women Artists: 1550–1950.* New York: Alfred Knopf.

Hasegawa, Sakae. 1994. *Atarashii bijutsukan-gaku: Eko-myuze no jissai.* Tokyo: Sankosha.

---. 1997. *Atarashii sofuto-myujiamu: Bijutsukan-unei no jissai.* Tokyo: Sankosha.

Hatsuda, Tooru. 1999. *Hyakkaten no tanjo.* Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo.

Hijikata, Teiichi. 1952. "Kanagawa-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan". Nihon no bijutsukan II. *Atelier* 303: 33–34.

---. 1960. "Tenrankai no iroirona keishiki". *Madoguchi* 53: 1–3.

---. 1976. "Atogaki". *Kindai nihon no gaka-ron II.* Hijikata Teiichi chosaku-shu. Vol. 7. Tokyo: Heibonsha. 429–38.

Hirano, Takashi. 1991. "Taisho-ki no minshu yoka, goraku chosa: 'Asakusa-chosa' to "'Yoka-seikatsu no kenkyu"-chosa'". *Kindai nihon shakai chosashi.* Ed. Takao Kawai. Vol. 2. 143–76. Tokyo: Keio Tsushin.

Hiruma, Nao. 1973. *Edo no kaicho.* Edo-chonin no kenkyu. Ed. Nishiyama Matsunosuke. Vol. 2. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan. 273–472.

Hoan. 1926. "Tenrankai Geijutsu". *Atelier* 3.11: 2–4.

Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. 1989. "The Museum in the Disciplinary Society". *Museum Studies in Material Culture.* Ed. Suzan M. Pearce. Leicester: Leicester University Press. 61–72.

Huffman, James L. 1997. *Creating a Public: People and Press in Meiji Japan.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Hunter, Janet E. 1989. *The Emergence of Modern Japan: An Introductory History since 1853.* London and New York: Longman.

Ide, Kazuko. 1986. "Bijutsukan jidai". Ono 1986, 191–209.

Imaizumi, Atsuo, and Teiichi Hijikata. 1955. "Taidan: Kindai bijutsukan". *Geijutsu Shincho* 6.9: 113–24.

Ishizuki, Minoru. 1985. "Overseas Study by Japanese in the Early Meiji Period". Burks 1985, 162–86.

Isomura, Eiichi, dir. 1982. *Hirogaru bunka-gyosei: Ima kakuchide okuno jikkenga.* Ed. Sakata Norio. Tokyo: Gyosei.

Isomura, Eiichi and Arata Isozaki. 1982. "Taidan: Toshi to bijutsukan, horu: Nihon to obei hikaku". Isomura 1982, 2–15.

Ito, Sei. 1957. "Geijutsu to seiji". Tokushu: Nihon no geijutsu to monbu-kanryo. *Gejutsu Shincho* 8.9: 242–45.

Ito, Toshiro. 1991. *Hirake, hakubutsukan.* Iwanami Booklet No. 188. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.

Jenkins, Richard. 1992. *Pierre Bourdieu.* Key Sociologists. London and New York: Routledge.

Johnson, Randal. 1993. "Editor's Introduction: Pierre Bourdieu on Art, Literature and Culture". Bourdieu 1993, 1–25.

Kanagawa-ken. 1952. Kanagawa-ken Kyoiku Iinkai. *Kanagawa-ken kyoiku gaiyo.*

---. 1953. Kanagawa-ken Kyoiku Iinkai. *Showa 27-nen-do Kanagawa-ken kyoiku gaiyo.*

Kanagawa-ken Bijutsuten Iinkai. 1997. *Kanagawa-ken Bijutsuten no kiroku: 1965 – 1995.* N.p.: Kanagawa-ken Bijutsuten Iinkai.

Kanagawa-kenritsu Kiindai Bijutsukan, ed. 1982. *Kanagawa-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan 30-nen no ayumi: Shiryo, tenrankai-mokuroku 1951–1981.*

Kanagawa-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan nenpo 1. 1957. "Koki". 101.

Kaneko, Atsushi. 2001. *Hakubutsukan no seijigaku.* Tokyo: Seikyusha.

Kaplan, Flora E. S., ed. 1994a. *Museums and the Making of "Ourselves".* London and New York: Leicester University Press.

---. 1994b. "Introduction". Kaplan 1994a, 1–15.

Kato, Yuji. 1982. "Chiho hakubutsukan bumu: Genjo to sono mondai". Isomura 1982, 266–73.

Katsumi, Masaru. 1956. "Depato-ten hanjoki". *Geijutsu Shincho* 7.4: 271–73.

Kaufmann, Thomas Dacosta. 1994. "From Treasury to Museum: The Collections of the Austrian Habsbourgs". *The Cultures of Collecting.* Ed. John Elsner and Roger Cardinal. London: Reaktion Books. 137–54.

Kikuchi, Minoru. 1983. "Waga-machi no bijutsu no susume: Tochigi-ken no baai". *E* 231: 18–21.

Kimoto, Bunpei. 1993. "Sengo-Aichi no bijutsu – fukko kara gendai e". Aichi-ken Bijutsukan 1993, 12–17.

Kinoshita, Naoyuki. 1993. *Bijutsu toyu misemono: Abura-e jaya no jidai.* Imeji-ridingu sosho. Tokyo: Heibonsha.

Kitazawa, Noriaki. 1989. *Me no shinden: "Bijutsu" juyo-shi noto.* Tokyo: Bijutu Shuppansha.

---. 1999. "'Nihon bijutsushi' to iu wakugumi". Tokyo Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyujo 1999, 22–31.

---. 2000. *Kyokai no bijutsushi: "Bijutsu" keiseishi noto.* Tokyo: Brücke.

Kobayashi, Takeo, ed. 1997. *20-nen-shi: Tochigiken Bijutsu-ka Kyokai.* N.p.: n.p.

Komori, Yoichi. 2001. *Postokoroniaru (Postcolonial).* Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.

Koven, Seth. 1994. "The Whitechapel Picture Exhibitions and the Politics of Seeing". Sherman and Rogoff 1994, 22–48.

Kubouchi, Kana. 1997. "Hakubutsukan hattatsu ron". Ohori 1997, 39–63.

Kumakura, Isao. 1995. *Chanoyu no bunkashi.* Tokyo: Nihon Hoso Shuppan Kyokai.

Kumamoto, Kenjiro. 1956–62. "Nihon ni okeru kindai-bijutsukan setsuritsu undo shi". *Gendai no me* 25 (1956); 26, 27, 29–32, 35–37 (1957); 40, 42–45, 48, 49 (1958); 50–55, 57–59 (1959); 66–73 (1960); 74–83 (1961); 86–93 (1962).

---. 1978. *Meiji-shoki raicho itaria-bijutsuka no kenkyu.* 1940. Tokyo: Yashio Shoten.

Kurahashi, Shigefumi, and Haruo Otsuka. 1997. *Geijutsu-shakaigaku josetsu.* Kyoto: Koyo Shobo.

Kurata, Kimihiro. 1979. *Hakubutsukan-gaku.* Tokyo: Tokyodo Shuppan.

---. 1982. "Bijutsukan-keiei-gaku no susume: Koritsu bijutsukan unei hoho no minaoshi". Isomura 1982, 257–65.

---. 1988. *Hakubutsukan no fukei.* Tokyo: Rokko Shuppan.

Kurata, Kimihiro and Kunio Yajima. 1997. *Shinpen: Hakubutsukan-gaku.* Tokyo: Tokyodo Shuppan.

Kurata, Kimihiro, et al. eds. 1996. *Hakubutsukan-gaku Jiten.* Tokyo: Tokyodo Shuppan.

Kuwahara, Mikine, et al. 1955. "Zadankai: Aichi-ken Bijutsukan ni nozomu". *Madoguchi* 1: 2–5.

Lebra, Takie Sugiyama. 1992. *Above the Clouds: Status Culture of the Modern Japanese Nobility.* Berkeley and Oxford: University of California Press.

Lee, Julian J. 1977. "The Origin and Development of Japanese Landscape Prints: A Study in the Synthesis of Eastern and Western Art". Diss. University of Washington.

Mabuchi, Akiko. 1999. "1900-nen Pari bankoku hakurankai to *Histoire de l'Art du Japon* wo megutte". Tokyo Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyujo 1999, 43–55.

Makita, Shigeru. 1957. "Depato-ten hanjoki". *Geijutsu Shincho* 8.6: 166–68.

Markus, Thomas A. 1993. *Buildings and Power: Freedom and Control in the Origin of Modern Building Types.* London and New York: Routledge.

Maruyama, Masao. 1964. *Gendai seiji no shiso to kodo.* Expanded Edition. Tokyo: Miraisha.

---. 1969. *Thought and Behaviour in Modern Japanese Politics.* Expanded Edition. Ed. Ivan Morris. London. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press. Trans. of Maruyama 1964.

---. 1996. "Shiso to seiji". *Maruyama Masao zenshu.* Vol. 7. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten. 111–49.

Mashimo, Shun. 1955. "Kindai Bijutsukan kaiage-hin". *Geijutsu Shincho* 6.2: 268–70.

McClellan, Andrew. 1994. *Inventing the Louvre: Art, Politics, and the Origins of the Modern Museum in Eighteenth-Century Paris.* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

McGuigan, Jim. 1992. *Cultural Populism.* London and New York: Routledge.

---. 1996. *Culture and the Public Sphere.* London and New York: Routledge.

Merriman, Nick. 1988. "The Social Basis of Museum and Heritage Visiting". *Museum Studies in Material Culture.* ed. S. M. Pearce. Leicester: Leicester University Press.

---. 1989. "Museum Visiting as a Cultural Phenomenon". *The New Museology.* ed. Paul Vergo. London: Reaktion Books. 149–71.

---. 1991. *Beyond the Glass Case: The Past, the Heritage and the Public in Britain.* Leicester: Leicester University Press.

Miyajima, Takashi. 1994. *Bunkateki saiseisan no shakaigaku.* Tokyo: Fujiwara Shoten.

Miyajima, Takashi, et al. 1991. "Gendai nihon ni okeru bunkateki saiseisan katei – hitotsu no apurochi". *Bunka to shakai.* Ed. Takashi Miyajima and Hidenori Fujita. Tokyo: Yushindo. 153–204.

Monbu-kagakusho. 2002. "Shin-kokuritsu-bijutsu-tenjishisetsu (National Gallery) (kisho) no kensetsu ni tsuite". Hodo-happyo-ichiran. 22 February. Web site: www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/houdou/14/02/020308.htm

Morooka, Hirokuma. 1995. *Kigyo hakubutsukan: Myjiamu manejimento.* Tokyo: Tokyodo Shuppan.

Murakami, Yoshihiko. 1997. *Chiiki hakubutsukan gairon.* Tokyo: Yuzankaku Shuppan.

Murata, Ryosaku. 1953. "Kamakura Kindai Bijutsukan ichi-nen no seiseki". *Geijutsu Shincho* 4.1: 165–67.

Naikaku Kanbo Naikaku Shingishitsu, ed. 1980. *Bunka no jidai.* Ohira sori no seisaku kenkyukai hokokusho 1. Tokyo: Okurasho Insatsukyoku.

Nakajima, Junichi. 1986. "Kita-kyushu-shi-ritsu bijutsukan ni okeru kikakuten no doko". *Hakubutsukan Kenkyu* 221: 9–10.

Nakamura, Denzaburo. 1991. *Meiji no choso: "Zo-wo-tsukuru-jutsu" igo".* Tokyo: Bunsaisha.

Nakamura, Giichi. 1981. *Nihon kindai-bijutsu ronso-shi.* Tokyo: Kyuryudo.

Nakamura, Kenichi, et al. 1954. "Nitten wo hihansuru: Zadankai". *Geijutsu Shincho* 5.2: 208–20.

Nakamura, Takao, ed. 1996a. *Hakubutsukan-gaku gairon.* Tokyo: Genryusha.

Nakamura, Takao. 1996b. "Nihon no hakubutsukan (2): Hakubutsukan-ho igo". Nakamura 1996a, 35–46.

Nishino, Yoshiaki. 1995. *Hakubutsukan-gaku: Furansu no bunka to senryaku.* Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai.

Nishiyama, Matsunosuke. 1982a. *Iemoto no kenkyu.* Nishiyama Matsunosuke chosaku-shu. Vol. 1. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan.

---. 1982b. *Iemoto-sei no tenkai.* Nishiyama Matsunosuke chosaku-shu. Vol. 2. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan.

Nittenshi Hensan Iinkai, ed. 1980. *Nittenshi 1: Bunten-hen 1.* Tokyo: Shadan-hojin Nitten.

---, ed. 1982. *Nittenshi 7: Teiten-hen.* Tokyo: Shadan-hojin Nitten.

Ohori, Satoshi, ed. 1997. *Hakubutsukan-gaku kyotei.* Tokyo: Tokyodo Shuppan.

Okada, Tooru, et al. 1959. "Tenran to kaishu". *Madoguchi* 45: 4–6.

Okubo, Toshiaki. 1993. *Kazoku seido no soshutsu.* Okubo Toshiaki rekishi chosakushu. Vol. 3. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan.

Ono, Masaharu, ed. 1986. *Bijutsukan: Kono muchinaru mono.* Nagoya: Akira Ikeda Gyarari.

Oshima, Seiji. 1982. "Hirogaru chiho bijutsukan: Sono doko to arikata". Isomura 1982, 260–65.

---. 1983. "Iwayuru Kita-Kanto Bijutsu-ten mondai wo megutte". Tochigi-kenritsu Bijutsukan 1983, n. pag.

---. 1984. "Chiho-bijutsukan to gyosei no taishitsu". *Asahi Shinbun* 17 December.

---. 1995. *Bijutsukan towa nanika.* Tokyo: Seieisha.

Ota, Saburo. 1955. "Kono-bijutsukan no ikikata". *Madoguchi* 1: 1.

Pearson, Nicholas. 1982. *The State and the Visual Arts: A Discussion of State Intervention in the Visual Arts in Britain, 1780–1981.* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Pevsner, Nikolaus. 1976. *A History of Building Types.* London: Thames and Hudson.

Pointon, Marcia, ed. 1994a. *Art Apart: Art Institutions and Ideology across England and North America.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Pointon, Marcia. 1994b. "Introduction". Pointon 1994a, 1–5.

Pollock, Griselda. 1988. *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and the History of Art.* London and New York: Routledge.

Pratt, Mary Louise. 1992. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation.* London and New York: Routledge.

Saito, Ryozo. 1944. *Nihon Bijutsu In shi.* Tokyo: Sogensha.

Saito, Yasuyoshi. 1987, 1988, 1989. "Sato Keitaro to Tokyo-fu Bijutsukan". *Tokyo-to Bijutsukan Kiyo* 11 (1987): 18–25; 12 (1988): 13–12; 13 (1989): 8–18.

Sakai, Seisui. 1928a. "Josetsu bijutsukan wo hirake". *Atelier* 5.4: 102–103.

---. 1928b. "Bijutsuhin kokyukin secchi no kyuyo". *Atelier* 5.5: 86–87.

Sakamaki, Yohio. 1987. *Kazoku seido no kenkyu.* 2 vols. Tokyo: Kasumi Kaikan.

Sakazaki, Shizuka. 1982. "Bijutsukai ichinen". *Waseda Bungaku* December (1926). Rpt. in Nitten-shi Hensan Iinkai 1982, 606–08.

Sakurai, Kunio. 1996. "Koritsu-chokuei-hakubutsukan to koritsu-zaidan-unei-hakubutsukan". Yumoto 1996, 57–72.

Sasaki, Asanobu. 1982. "Hirogaru chiho-hakubutsukan: Sono doko to arikata". Isomura 1982, 274–80.

Sasaki, Seiichi. 1982. "Kamakura Kindai Bijutsukan no shuppatsu". Kanagawa-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan 1982, n.pag.

Sato, Doshin. 1996. *"Nihon bijutsu" no tanjo: Kindai nihon no kotoba to senryaku.* Tokyo: Kodansha.

---. 1999. "Sekaikan no saihen to rekishikan no saihen". Tokyo Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyujo 1999, 111–27.

Sawa, Koichi. 1925. *Tokyo-furitsu bijutsukan kensetsu no yurai oyobi jiseki yoroku.* Distributed privately on 28 October 1925.

Seki, Hideo. 1993. *Nihon hakubutsukan nyumon.* Tokyo: Yuzankaku Shuppan.

Shelton, Anthony Alan. 1994. "Cabinets of Transgression: Renaissance Collections and Incorporation of the New World". *The Cultures of Collecting.* Ed. John Elsner and Roger Cardinal. London: Reaktion Books. 177–203.

Sherman, Daniel J. 1989. *Worthy Monuments: Art Museums and the Politics of Culture in Nineteenth-Century France.* Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press.

Sherman, Daniel J., and Irit Rogoff, eds. 1994. *Museum Culture.* London New York: Routledge.

Shimada, Yasuhiro. 1994. *Henyosuru biishiki: Nihon-yoga no tenkai.* Kyoto: Kyoto Shinbunsha.

Shimazu, Fumio. 1990. "Oshu no hakubutsukan-jijo kara mita waga-kuni no hakubutsukan no kadai ni tsuite". *Hakubutsukan Kenkyu* 271: 42–43.

Shimotsuke Shinbun 7 March 1969. "Miya-shi ni Kenritsu Bijutsukan wo kensetsu: 45-nen-do ni kansei mezasu, shikichi kimari koso-kento". [MM118]

Shimotsuke Shinbun 15 April 1969. "Kenritsu Bijutsukan kensetsu hon-gimari: San-nen-keikaku de kansei e, kon-nendo kohan ni chakko, ken-fujin-sodanjo-ato ni". [MM119]

Shimotsuke Shinbun 10 February 1983. "Ken-bijutsuka-kyokai: Kenritsu-bijutsukan ni kashi-gyarari wo".

Shimotsuke Shinbun 6 March 1983. "Kenritsu-bijutsukan-cho no hanron keisai: Komuin to-shite ayamari".

Shimotsuke Shinbun 7 May 1983. "Ken-bijutsukan yogo wo hyomei: Chiiki-no Bijutsu-wo Kangaeru Konwakai, kyou soritsu sokai".

Shimotsuke Shinbun 8 May 1983. "Dai-sansha-teki tachiba wo kyocho, Chiiki-no Bijutsu-wo Kangaeru Konwakai, ken-bijutsu-ronso no naka-de hossoku"..

Shimotsuke Shinbun 17 July 1983. "Sakka Renmei no kenritsu-bijutsukan hihan, nazeka gikai ni tobihi".

Shimotsuke Shinbun 15, 22 October and 5, 12, 19 November 2000. "Ima, ken-nai bijutsu wa". Nos. 1–5.

Shin Bijutsu Shinbun 21 May 1984. "Henshu nikki".

Shiina, Noritaka. 1988. *Nihon hakubutsukan hattatsu-shi.* Tokyo: Yuzankaku Shuppan.

---. 1989. *Meiji hakubutsukan kotohajime.* Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan.

Stafford, Barbara Maria. 1994. *Artful Science: Enlightenment Entertainment and the Eclipse of Visual Education.* Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press.

Stallybrass, Peter, and Allon White. 1986. *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression.* London: Methuen.

Sugawara, Norio. 1984. *Bijutsukan ima.* Tokyo: Kyuryudo.

Tachiki, Shoichiro. 1996. "Hokoku 1: Chiiki, shakai ni okeru koritsu-bijutsukan". Yumoto 1996, 19–28.

Takagi, Hiroshi. 1999. "Nihon kindai no bunkazai hogo gyosei to bijutsushi no seiritsu". Tokyo Kokuritsu Bunka Kenkyujo 1999, 13–21.

Takahashi, Yoshidtaka. 1957. "Bijutsu dantai no hanran". Gaka to bijutsu dantai. *Geijutsu Shincho* 8.10: 183–85.

Takauchi, Sosuke. 1984a. "Hon-ken bijutsu-kai wo ureu". *Shimotsuke Shinbun* 10 October.

---. 1984b. "Yoneda Hiroshi-shi ni kotaeru". *Shimotsuke Shinbun* 7 November.

Takeda, Michitaro. 1969. *Nihon Bijutsushi.* Tokyo: Kondo Shuppansha.

Takumi, Hideo. 1983. *Taisho no koseiha.* Tokyo: Yuhikaku.

Tanaka, Stephan. 1993. *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History.* Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Oxford: University of California Press.

Taylor, Brandon. 1994. "From Penitentiary to 'Temple of Art': Early Metaphors of Improvement at the Milbank Tate". Pointon 1994a, 9–32.

---. 1999. *Art for the Nation: Exhibitions and the London Public 1747–2001.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Thomas, Nicholas. 1991. *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific.* Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press.

Tochigi-ken. 1971. Tochigi-kenritsu Bijutsukan Unei-junbi Iinkai Jimukyoku. "Tochigi-kenritsu Bijutsukan Unei-junbi Iinkai Shiryo". Unpublished material prepared for a meeting at Tochigi-ken Shoko Kaikan Tokubetsu-shitsu on 30 June 1971.

---. 1983a. *Dai 185-kai, dai 186-kai Tochigi-ken Gikai kaigiroku.* 1983.

---. 1983b. Tochigi-ken Kyoiku Iinkai and Tochigi-ken Bunka Kyokai. *Geijutsu Tochigi: Tochigi-ken Geijutsu-sai 35 Nen-shi.*

Tochigi-ken Bunka Kyokai, ed. 1997. *Geijutsu Tochigi: Tochigi-ken Geijutsu-sai no 50-shunen.* N.p.: n.p.

Tochigi-ken Geijutsu Tochigi Kankokai, ed. 1967. *Geijutsu Tochigi: Tochigi-ken Geijutsu-sai 20-nen sai.* Utsunomiya: Geijutsu Tochigi Kankokai.

Tochigi-kenritsu Bijutsukan, ed. 1972. *Tochigi-ken Bijutsukan kaikan-kinen-ten: Tochigi-ken no bijutsu.* Exhibition Catalogue. N.p.: n.p.

---, ed. 1977a. *Tochigi-ken bijutsu no genkyo.* Exhibition Catalogue. N.p.: n.p.

---. 1977b. *Kita-Kanto Bijutsu-ten, dai 2-kai.* Exhibition Catalogue.

---. 1980. *Kita-Kanto Bijutsu-ten, dai 3-kai.* Exhibition Catalogue.

---. 1981. *Tochigi-kenritsu Bijutsukan Josetsu-ten Zuroku.* Exhibition Catalogue. 1981.

---. 1983. *Kita-Kanto Bijutsu-ten, dai 4-kai.* Exhibition Catalogue.

Tokyo Bijutsukan, ed. 1928. *Taisho-15/Showa-gan-nendo Tokyo-furitsu Bijutukan nenkan.* Unpublished material dated 5 December.

Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku Hyakunen-shi Hensan Iinkai and Geijutsu Kenkyu Shinko Zaidan, eds. 1987. *Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku hyakunen-shi: Tokyo Bijutsu Gakko hen.* Tokyo: Gyosei.

Tokyo Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyujo, ed. 1999. *Kataru genzai, katarareru kako: Nihon no bijutushigaku hyaku-nen.* Tokyo: Heibonsha.

Tokyo-to Bijutsukan, ed. 1955. *Kaikan 30-shunen kinen Tokyo-to Bijutsukan gaiyo.* Tokyo: Tokyo-to Kyoiku Iinkai.

---, ed. 1975. *Senzen no zenei ten: Nika-sho, Chogyu-sho no sakka to sono shuhen.* Exhibition Catalogue. Tokyo: n.p.

Tokyo-to Kyoiku Iinkai, ed. c.1965. *Kaikan 40-shunen kinen: Tokyo-to Bijutsukan no ayumi.* Tokyo: Tokyo-to Kyoiku Iinkai.

Trodd, Colin. 1994. "Culture, Class, City: the National Gallery, London and the Spaces of Education, 1822–57". Pointon 1994a, 33–49.

Tsuji, Nobuo, ed. 1991. *Nihon Bijutsu-shi.* Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha.

Tsuruta, Soichiro. 1985. "Igirisu no hakubutsukan-joho: Sono chubu-hiho wo chushin ni". *Hakubutsukan Kenkyu* 204: 1–7.

Uemura, Takachiyo, and Atsuo Imaizumi. 1953. "Kokuritsu Kindai Bijutsukan e-no gimon ni kotaeru". *Bijutsu Hihyo* 14: 11–21.

Uemura, Takachiyo, et al. 1953. "Kokuritsu Kindai Bijutsukan ni tou: Nihon kindai-bijutsu tenrankai wo keikini". *Bijutsu Hihyo* 13: 30–41.

Umesao, Tadao. 1991. *Chiteki-shimin to hakubutsukan.* Tokyo: Heibonsha.

Vergo, Peter. 1989. "Introduction". *The New Museology.* Peter Vergo, ed. London: Reaktion Books. 1–5.

Watanabe, Tatsuya. 1998. *Dai-sodo: Tochigi-kenritsu Bijutsukan mondai no shinso.* Mibu: Sano Kanzan Kenkyujo.

Williams, Raymond. 1981. *Culture.* Fontana New Sociology. Ed. Gavin Mackenzie. Glasgow: William Collins.

Wittlin, Alma S. 1970. *Museums: In Search of a Usable Future.* Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press.

Yagyu, Fujio. 1957. "Nihon no bijutsukan". *Kanagawa-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan nenpo* 1: 87–100.

---. 1982. "1950-nendai no omoide". Kanagawa-kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan 1982, n.pag.

Yoneda, Hiroshi. 1984. "Sakkon no ken-bijutsu-kai ni tsuite". *Shimotsuke Shinbun* 31 October.

Yonekura, Mamoru. 1986. "Chiho-bijutsukan wa doko-e mukau?". Ono 1986, 172–84.

Yoshimi, Shunya. 1992. *Hakurankai no seijigaku.* Tokyo: Chuokoronsha.

Yoshimura, Isao. 1970. "Dai 24-kai geijutsu-sai: Yoga-bu wo owatte". *Shimotsuke Shinbun* 25 November.[MM162]

Yumoto, Koichi, ed. 1996. *Zoku bijutsukan, hakubutsukan wa "ima": Kiko, unei no riso to genjitsu.* Tokyo: Nichigai Asoshietsu.

Appendix:

List of Personal Interviews

I conducted all interviews during my visits to Japan. The list below details (a) the date and place of each interview, (b) the position taken by the interviewee at the time of the interview ("Current Position") and, if applicable, his/her former positions, and (c) the specific objectives and concerns I had for the interview. The general purposes of the interviews were (i) to extract the information and to clarify the particular details which were not accessible in any documented sources available and (ii) to locate the documents which were not held by public institutions and to identify useful contacts who might have a good knowledge of the issues that I was concerned with (see 1.3). Here I only mention the particular purposes and interests I wanted to pursue in the interviews. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. Many interviews were preceded and/or followed by several other contacts with the interviewees.

Aoki, Hiroshi. 2001.

Date/Place: 3 August 2001. The Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts.
Current Position: Head Curator of the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts.
Objectives and Concerns: Access to his private collection of unpublished and published materials pertaining to the "Tochigi Problem"; historical details of the Problem and its aftermath; his own views on the Problem as a curator who was involved in it; the curatorial practices of the Tochigi Museum in the 1980s and today.

Asahi, Akira. 2000.

Date/Place: 19 June 2000. His House (Tokyo).
Former Positions: Curator of the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (1951−75). Head Curator of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (1975−80s).
Objectives and Concerns: The curatorial practices of the Kanagawa and the Metropolitan Museums; the early years of the Kanagawa Museum; the curators' relationships with the art groups; the impacts the curators' had on the Metropolitan Museum.

Chino, Kaori. 2000.

Date/Place: 6 June 2000. The Gakushuin University (Tokyo).
Current Position: Professor of Art History at the Gakushuin University.
Objectives and Concerns: Recent currents of feminist critiques in Japanese art history and museum studies.

Fujishima, Toshie. 2000.

Date/Place: 31 May 2000. The Kanagawa Prefectural Hall (Yokohama City, Kanagawa)
Current Position: Head of the Gallery Division of the Kanagawa Prefectural

Hall.
Objectives and Concerns: The roles of the Art Gallery of the Prefectural Hall; its relationships with the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art; the historical details of the Kenten art exhibitions; the development of the art groups in the prefecture.

Kaizuka, Takeshi. 2000.
Date/Place: 22 June 2000. The Bridgestone Art Museum (Tokyo).
Current Position: Curator of the Bridgestone Art Museum.
Objectives and Concerns: The early curatorial practices of the Bridgestone Museum in relation to other institutions specialising in modern art such as the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art and the neighbouring Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art.

Kimoto, Bunpei. 2000.
Daté/Place: 17 May 2000. The Aichi Prefectural Art Museum.
Current Position: Director of the Planning and Distribution Division of the Museum.
Former Positions: Curator of the Aichi Prefectural Art Museum (1975–92).
Objectives and Concerns: The early curatorial practices of the Aichi Museum and the development of its curatorial policy; the process in which the new museum was established in 1993 as a hybrid of the collection-based institution associated with museum-based curators and the rental galleries for the local art group exhibitions.

Kinoshita, Naoyuki. 2000.
Date/Place: 10 May 2000. Hongo Campus, University of Tokyo.
Current Position: Assistant Professor of the Research Institute for Cultural Resources, Department of Humanities, University of Tokyo.
Former Positions: Curator of the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Modern Art.
Objectives and Concerns: The development of the concept of art ("*bijutsu*") in Meiji Japan and its relations to the development of art museums.

Kitazawa, Noriaki. 2000.
Date/Place: 20 June 2000. The Atomi Gakuen Women's University (Saitama)
Current Position: Professor of Art History at the Atomi Gakuen Women's University.
Objectives and Concerns: The development of the concept of art ("*bijutsu*") in Meiji Japan and its relations to the development of art museums.

Kumagai, Isako. 2000.
Date/Place: 9 June 2000. The Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Contemporary Art.
Current Position: Curator of the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Contemporary Art.
Former Positions: Curator of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (1973–95).
Objectives and Concerns: The early curatorial practices of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum; the process in which the curatorial policy of the Metropolitan Museum of Contemporary Art was developed; her view on being a

woman in the male-dominant world of curators.

Mamuro, Yoshitake. 2000.
Date/Place: 26 May 2000. The Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum.
Current Position: Director of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum.
Objectives and Concerns: Access to unpublished documents pertaining to the development of the curatorial policy in the mid-1970s; the process in which the Museum's collections were transferred to the new Museum of Contemporary Art in the mid-1990s; the current curatorial practices of the Museum and their prospects.

Matsumoto, Toru. 2000.
Date/Place: 7 June 2000. The Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art.
Current Position: Head Curator of the Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art.
Objectives and Concerns: The early development of the Museum's curatorial practices; the Museum's relationships with other institutions specialising in modern art such as the Kanagawa and the Bridgestone Museums; the Museum's relations to the pre-1945 collection which had been transferred to the Museum from the Ministry of Education soon after its opening.

Mizusawa, Tsutomu. 2000.
Date/Place: 4 May 2000. The Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art.
Current Position: Curator of the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art.
Objectives and Concerns: The development of the Museum's curatorial policy; the Museum's roles and functions in relation to the Kanagawa Prefectural Hall; the development of the Museum's collection and permanent displays; the Museum's relationship to the Kenten and the art group exhibitions.

Oshima, Seiji. 2001.
Date/Place: 28 July 2001. The Setagaya Art Museum (Tokyo).
Current Position: Director of the Setagaya Art Museum.
Former Positions: Founding member and Director of the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts.
Objectives and Concerns: His view on the "Tochigi Problem" and its aftermath; the process in which the Tochigi Museum was planned and established; the development of the Museum's curatorial policy; the development of the Kita-Kanto exhibitions.

Otoba, Satoshi. 2000.
Date/Place: 9 June 2000. The Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Contemporary Art.
Current Position: Head Curator of the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Contemporary Art.
Former Positions: Curator of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (1980–96).
Objectives and Concerns: The early curatorial practices of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum; the process in which the curatorial policy of the Metropolitan Museum of Contemporary Art was developed.

Sato, Shinmei (Nobuaki). 2001.

Date/Place: 8 August 2001. Utsunomiya City, Tochigi.
Current Position: Graphic Designer. Secretary of "the Roundtable for the Consideration of Art in the Region".
Objectives and Concerns: His own involvement in the "Tochigi Problem"; the establishment of the Roundtable, its activities, and its current condition; the Roundtable's relationships with the Museum and the Kenten artists; his view on the Problem and its aftermath.

Takeyama, Hirohiko. 2001.

Date/Place: 9 August 2001. The Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts.
Current Position: Curator of the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts. Founding member of the Museum.
Objectives and Concerns: The process in which the Museum was planned and established; the early development of the curatorial practices of the Museum; the early interactions between the Museum and the local artists; his involvement in the "Tochigi Problem"; his view on the Problem and its aftermath.

Yagyu, Fujio. 2000.

Date/Place: 12 May 2000. Ueno, Tokyo.
Former Positions: Curator of the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (1951—75). Head of the Gallery Division of the Kanagawa Prefectural Hall (1975–80).
Objectives and Concerns: The process in which the Museum was planned and established; the early development of the Museum's curatorial practices; the Museum's relationships with the Kenten exhibition and the art groups; the process in which the Prefectural Hall was planned and established; the roles and functions of the Gallery Division of the Hall in relation to other public art institution including the Kanagawa Museum.